MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

MARCH 2017 NO. 406 $4.99

"TO EXIST AND TO SURVIVE AND TO BE HERE IS RESISTANCE.

MY EXISTENCE IS RESISTANCE TO THESE SYSTEMS

AND I WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST AND I WILL CONTINUE TO BE HERE

AND I WILL NOT GIVE THAT UP

BECAUSE IT IS MY RIGHT AS A PERSON"

BODY PRESSURE PELUQUERÍA CANINA BETON VIDA RUIM
JESSIE LYNN MCMAINS ZERODENT PALBERTA
FINNISH KBD RARITIES ARCHIVE UPDATE SECOND COMBAT

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TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
WATERY LOVE – 45
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
AHOE-AHOEA – LP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
HARTLEY C. WHITE & FRIENDS – LP
MOONDOGS – 12"
OHYDA – 12"
NOTHING BAND – CS

MATT BADENHOP

HYÄNE – Angst Real EP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
TENEMENT RATS – EP
NEW BERLIN – Basic Function LP
TERRORSTAT – 6-Spors EP
COLD LEATHER – CS
AHOE-AHOEA – LP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
GYPSY SS – CS
PHIL. VIOLATORS – CS

ARIELLE BURGDORF

TERRORSTAT – 6-Spors EP
HYÄNE – Angst Real EP
HEAT – live
KRIMEWATCH – Demo 2016 EP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
MOONDOGS – 12"
DIE GROUP – Joe Namath EP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
ALIEN BOY – Stay Alive EP

MITCH CARDWELL

DIE GROUP – Joe Namath EP
MORDECAI – 45
AHOE-AHOEA – LP
WATERY LOVE – 45
LEMONADE – Pink EP
MANATEEES – LP
SOFT TUG – live
MOONDOGS – 12"
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
MEN WITH CHIPS – Attention Spent LP

ROBERT COLLINS

HEAT – Feel It EP
THOUGHT PATTERN – CS
LEMONADE – Pink EP
THE WAR GOES ON – LP
OHYDA – 12"
PISSE – CS
BRAIN VACATION – LP
KRIMEWATCH – Demo 2016 EP
WVRM – Heartache LP
LOS IMPUESTOS – EP
THE SMARTHEARTS – CS

LAYLA GIBBON

AHOE-AHOEA – LP
BACTERIA – 28 Trax Demo LP
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
MOONDOGS – 12"
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
WATERY LOVE – 45
NEW BERLIN – Basic Function LP
MORDECAI – 45

DAN GOETZ

LEMONADE – Pink EP
DAME – live
KRIMEWATCH – Demo 2016 EP
KARBÖNITE – flexi
HUMUS – Eterna Condanna LP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
SSYNDROM – EP
HARTLEY C. WHITE & FRIENDS – LP
ALIEN BOY – Stay Alive EP
WATERY LOVE – 45

GREG HARVESTER

COME HOLY SPIRIT – Grand Island LP
COLD LEATHER – CS
PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
HARTLEY C. WHITE & FRIENDS – LP
NOTHING BAND – CS
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
THE WAR GOES ON – LP
MANATEEES – LP
NIP DRIVERS – Destroy Whitey LP

RAY LUJAN

ALIEN BOY – Stay Alive EP
DEAD ON THE WIRE – EP
THE DE RELLAS – Freakshow CD
D.O.A. – Fucked Up Donald EP
MOONDOGS – 12"
PANSY DIVISION – Quite Contrary LP
PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
TENEMENT RATS – EP
THIGH MASTER – Early Times EP
THE WAR GOES ON – LP

FRED SCHRUNK

PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
HYÄNE – Angst Real EP
OHYDA – 12"
NEW BERLIN – Basic Function LP
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
HEAT – Feel It EP
AHOE-AHOEA – LP
WATERY LOVE – 45
DOC AND THE PARASITES – live

KENNY KAOS

TENEMENT RATS – EP
TERRORSTAT – 6-Spors EP
D.O.A. – Fucked Up Donald EP
DEAD ON THE WIRE – EP
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
HERD OF WASTERS – Total Stinker LP
FLASHER – 12"
MOONDOGS – 12"
PRIESTS – Nothing Feels Natural LP
THIGH MASTER – Early Times LP

MARISSA MAGIC

LAS SUCIAS – live
DAISY WORLD – live
HARTLEY C. WHITE & FRIENDS – LP
AHOE–AHOEA – LP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
PRIESTS - Nothing Feels Natural LP
PURE SHIT – live
REARRANGED FACE – live
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
SECOND LIFE – live

LENA TAHMASSIAN

Haut die Bullen platt wie Stullen...

CAROLYN KEDDY

WATERY LOVE – 45
LEMONADE – Pink EP
BRUISER QUEEN – 45
HOMOSTUPIDS – Sleepy Tree EP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
MANATEEES – LP/ BEASTEATER – LP
GREEN DREAMS – CD
TENEMENT RATS – EP
THE AUTOPSIES – EP
SAVING BANKSY – film
ATOM MOUTH GIMLIES – 12"

ROTTEN RON READY

KARBÖNITE – flexi
RED DEATH – Deterrence EP
SSYNDROM – History Hysteria EP
LEMONADE – Pink EP
TENEMENT RATS – EP
OS REPLICANTES – Nicotina EP
HEAT – Feel It EP
KRIMEWATCH – Demo 2016 EP
MANATEEES – LP
OHYDA – 12"

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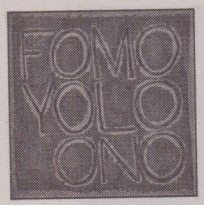

GREG HOY & THE BOYS
FOMO YOLO ONO EP CD

8 caffeinated punk pop tails of lottery, luck, and lust recorded to creamy tape at Tiny Telephone, Oakland

'Clear-eyed rock fueled by straight-up melodicism' – Time Out NY

THE ROYAL PANICS
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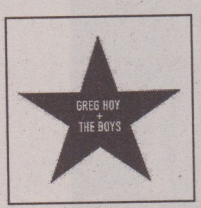
'Dirtbags who like loud amps' – The Deli Magazine



GREG HOY & THE BOYS
The Big Red Man 7 inch

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'The guy knows his way around a crunchy lick' – DAGGAR

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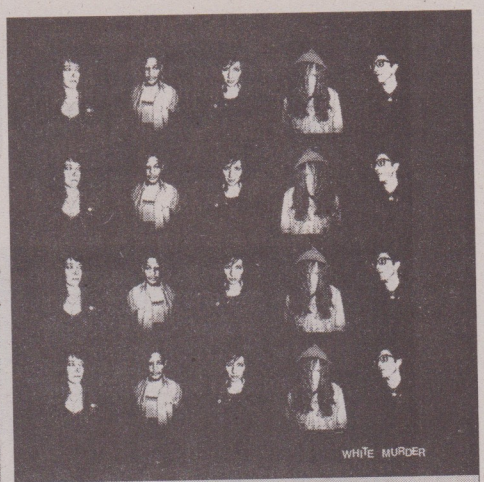

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LETTERS

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For anyone still of the deluded opinion that a Trump presidency will somehow make punk and adjacent subcultural music(s) more-political / radical and / or "great" again, I have two comments:

1) There have been many, many people consistently making politically and culturally radical music during the entire Obama presidency and well before it, with a particularly powerful wave in the last four to five years—maybe you haven't been paying attention? Or maybe you have been paying attention but don't like the nature of modern political / cultural radicalism, something that is likely to be the case if your idea of radical culture and politics is two or three decades old and frozen in amber.

2) If your opinion is more about the idea that culturally radical and / or political music will be more "popular," as in well-known and widely-disseminated / acknowledged enough to influence people getting seriously into music for the first time, the likelihood is that the exact opposite will happen.

The average (non-marginalized) late high school or college kid just getting into "underground" music and culture, especially punk, usually starts out with some variation of a basic liberal perception of the world.

Neoliberal regimes like the Obama or Clinton administrations tend to create mass youth disillusionment over their blatant hypocrisies, and the last several decades have shown us that this disillusionment tends to spawn society-wide shifts (drawing in many of the "average" kids described above) into political radicalism / mass movements and radical cultural expressions (including radical music). In other words, under neoliberal rule radicals go on the offensive, and the potential opportunities are greater to radicalize at least some people with garden-variety liberal viewpoints into something much more interesting.

In contrast, under far-right, neoconservative / neofascist regimes such as those of Bush II and, presumably, Trump, dedicated radicals keep fighting but have to go at least partially on the defensive (often by necessity). When it comes to the majority of basic liberals, they might still go to a protest here or there, or put a new angry bumper sticker on their car. However, when it comes to the increasingly-difficult reality of radical politics / actions and adjacent culture, the majority of liberals tend to stick their heads in the warm sand of avoidance, pine for the days of neoliberal mediocrity, and listen to whatever music soothes them the most.

Don't forget what was genuinely popular (for the most part) in the musical "underground" during the Bush years: "psychedelic folk" (i.e. Devendra Banhart), sunny reverb-washed mellow-garage surf sounds, generic No Idea dude punk about drinking with your bearded man buddies, watered-down retro '70s rock devoid of meaningful lyrical content, and backpack hip-hop mainly from white dudes trying way too hard to sound "weird" and whining about their romantic failings.

A radical underground continues to exist under far-right rule, of course, but it isn't going to be "popular" because the mass of people (especially those who are not already marginalized / vulnerable) just want a cup of hot chocolate and a head rub to soothe fascism away from the periphery of their vision. I'm sure, however, there will be some variation of NOFX's 2004 "punkvoter" campaign in 2020 to support whatever neoliberal flack comes forward, so if that's your idea of "making punk great again" or whatever you will likely be pleased.

—John No

K-TOWN HARDCORE FESTIVAL: ART OPEN CALL

We are looking for people to contribute their art projects to this year's K-Town festival edition, which will take place June 16–18th, 2017 in Copenhagen. Even though there have been artistic contributions during the past years, it is our experience that the punk scene has been reduced to music as the main form of expression.

This year, in order to create a more experimental and diverse festival, we want to give more space to art. We want to initiate collaborations that can push these boundaries and add to the whole experience of these three days of DIY. We are therefore looking for people and collectives who want to participate with their projects. The only guideline is that your projects should be based on or inspired by the progressive aesthetic of the punk scene we are all a part of.

We accept finished pieces as well as ideas for pieces and projects which can be developed before the festival takes place. It is possible to send in ideas for projects within all types of media including performance, sound, sculpture, installation, film, video, etc.

What we need from you:

– Short description of your project (max. one page)
– Digital photo documentation and / or links to online video material or a website
– If you have a project that you want to realize for the festival in June, send in a rough draft of the piece and if possible an image documentation

Please keep in mind that K-Town is a DIY and non-profit Festival. Send your application or any questions to ktownhardcoreart@gmail.com. Deadline for entries is March 1, 2017, and you will get an answer by April 1 at the latest.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR ARCHIVE SHITWORKERS

Do you have access to a computer and an internet connection? Then you're qualified to help us complete the ultimate punk resource, our online, searchable database of every review ever published in *MRR*. Write to archive@maximumrocknroll.com to get involved and help us make it happen!

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MITB "DE-PROGRAMMING THE BIGOT" 10"
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EXTREME NOISE TERROR LP
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FUCK YOU PAY ME "PUBLIC DISGRACE" LP
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COLUMNS

EUROPE: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

BY METTE HELMS

Here I am, writing my first column as 2016 is about to turn into 2017. Copenhagen has been covered in a thick layer of gray clouds all December, meaning the city is left in an eternal twilight state throughout the few hours of sunlight December delivers. I'm sitting in the middle of it and wondering how you even write a first column. A first column is like a band's first demo—you have to be entertaining enough to keep people interested but, hey, it's only a demo. If you show off your best skills already now, it's only gonna go downhill from here.

Speaking of the band demo paradox, I'm listening to a lot of band demos these days. My yearly booking obligations mean that this is the time of year where I dig around on the Internet for hours and hours looking for new interesting European bands to get on a plane or in a van to Copenhagen once summer arrives. It's one of my favorite personal punk seasons. I'll cast the Youtube versions of my favorite 2016 LPs to my TV / stereo set-up, and hours later I'll be blown away by a Barcelona band's first live performance as seen through someone's camera lens as I'm traveling through the endless spiral of Youtube video suggestions. By March I'll have listened to at least 300 bands if I combine my own discoveries with the bands submitted to me. A portion of these bands immediately catch my attention and I expect that their demos and records will be spinning on my stereo on repeat in 2017. For this reason I'm dedicating my first column to some of the European bands that caught my attention in the past year.

One record I'm particularly excited to put on my stereo is Copenhagen locals PLANET Y's upcoming 7". This is one of the best bands to come out of Denmark in many years in my opinion. Think Dangerhouse-style punk rock merged with WIPERS and K-town classic GORILLA ANGREB, with the DIY mono-production a home studio will bring. After their 2016 cassette tape demo, my expectations are high for what this band will bring next.

PLANET Y shares members with JUNTA, which is a band that just keeps on getting better and better with every release. They've been around for a year and a half but it wasn't until this spring that I noticed how good their "Peace / War" hardcore punk is. They're the kind of band that just keeps spitting out release after release. They already have four tapes and one 7" under their belt with another 7" pressing on the way. One of the strongest hardcore acts in Copenhagen for sure, and also a pleasure to see live.

I usually say "Malmö has the bands, Copenhagen has the venues" when asked about the punk scenes in Copenhagen and our Swedish twin city Malmö. Separated by a narrow body of water and a twenty-minute train ride, the two cities' scenes are conjoined. The Malmö scene is as active and noisy as ever. SNOR is my favorite new Malmö band, and I was completely blown away by their live performance before I had even heard their recordings. SNOR plays raw hardcore with reverb / delay drenched vocals performed in the singer's native Polish. A quick Google Translation of their song titles ("Class War," "Warrior"...) and their crossed out dollar sign logo are hints that this is a band with a political perspective. Their demo is sold out on both cassette and vinyl but there are whispered rumors about new SNOR recordings, and I cross my fingers that they are true.

Traveling further North in Sweden, AXE RASH is a band to look out for in 2017. They delivered an inferno of a floor show at a house in Copenhagen last summer. A sneak peak of their upcoming LP, out in February, convinced me that this is also a band that'll kick ass on vinyl spinning in my living room. They play raw and fast, and singer Hilda's mosh moves can conquer the moves of any hardcore dude by far. Two members also play in the new hardcore super-group FERAL BRAIN, featuring members of DS-13 and about a million other Swedish bands. Yes, the Scandinavian scene has the trait that it's the same few people playing in all the bands. No FERAL BRAIN tracks are recorded yet but I once again caught a sneak peak of a rehearsal recorded with— quote—"an iPhone up someone's butt." Now, hardcore is not a competition about having the best sound production and from what I could hear FERAL BRAIN will be ready to kick some ass with their fast and skilled hardcore punk soon.

Staying in raw and rowdy hardcore punk, Berlin's international Italian-tongued outfit IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO's two track demo is definitely worth a listen. It's noisy yet melodic in a way that I feel like I want to sing along and shake my fist despite only being able to comprehend about 2% of what is sung (which is the case with most hardcore punk bands for me anyway). I'll be picking up their 7" at a release gig with Mallorca legends ORDEN MUNDIAL in Copenhagen just a few days after this column's deadline and I'm already excited to hear more from them.

It's impossible to have mentioned a Spanish band without speaking about how insanely good Spanish bands are at the moment. Every year new amazing bands pop up. So let's move into Spanish territory for a bit. As Barcelona is getting more and more flooded with tourists, the better its punk bands get. There has to be a correlation between the degree of gentrification a city is going through and the musical strength of its punk scene. LUX is a Barcelona band I discovered in one of my many journeys floating through the YouTube superhighway. LUX are a time machine that'll send you straight to 1982's UK yet it's creative and original enough to not be a copycat band. They sure do sound like DIRT but they have a strong Barcelona vibe to them—a vibe that can't quite be described. Quoting ÚLTIMO RESORTE: *"Barcelona es diferente."*

Spain is also producing the best melodic bands—there's just something about how the Spanish language fits with punk rock. RATA NEGRA from Madrid is the perfect example of a dance-able, sing-along band of skilled punk musicians. Their music is darker than many melodic bands and they have definitely added some DEAD MOON aesthetics to the cover of their upcoming LP (out late January). Madrid is also the home of post-punkers SATÉLITE, who play a stripped-down '80s depression era style without the aid of the chorus pedals that seem to have taken over post-punk. A quick other post-punk mention is Mallorca's DESENTERRADAS, whose hypnotic rhythms and death rock influences create an atmosphere submerged by darkness and spellbinding harmonies. Europe is for

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sure still surfing the post-punk wave smoothly and I hope it'll last.

In contrast to Spain, Eastern Europe is often overlooked, and I must admit that I can barely mention five bands from the region. Eastern Europe has the stigma of being associated with the style of crust punk that was popular in Western Europe fifteen years ago. I think that's why it's the norm to avoid this big chunk of the European continent. That's the reason Poland's OHYDA surprised me. It's not a band that escapes the crust association stereotype but their distorted dark hardcore sounds very contemporary with plenty of different genre influences on their self-titled LP out on La Vida Es Un Mus. The production of the LP is very good and especially the drums are above what you'll hear on the average punk record. Now is the time to start digging into the Eastern European scene, I am sure.

All in all, European punk has advanced musically over the past few years and is growing out of the position as American punk's younger, inferior sibling. Yet most quality shows, at least in Copenhagen, seem to revolve around a Northern American touring band. With flight tickets dropping rapidly each year, flying in a European band to Copenhagen costs the same as having a touring band board the (expensive) ferry to reach the island nation of Denmark from mainland Europe. Perhaps it's hard to break the good old habit of a show with one touring band, two or three locals, 9:00 p.m. doors and a "first band 10:00 p.m." promise that'll be delayed 20-30 minutes. I guess it's my commitment as a so-called booker to break the circle instead of sitting in front of my computer complaining about it to the readers of a zine. So, I'm signing off and hope I've been entertaining enough to keep your attention, but also that I have yet to show my best column writing skills. Punk punk punk!

You may be looking at the title of this column and asking yourself why the heck there's a PANTERA reference in *Maximum Rocknroll*. Well, you've got nothing to worry about—this is just a metal column, not a Phil Anselmo worshipping bro-fest. You won't find any reviews or comments on the sort of jock-friendly metal here. The title of this column is rather a perversion of that sort of mentality. This column will, like the other metal columns that have been featured in this rag, focus on bands that work on a smaller scale than the typical ones you might see in other magazines at the newsstand.

My name is Bradley Ellison, and I'm a (just recently out) trans woman living in Tallahassee, Florida. Every other week, I host a metal program on the college radio station, WVFS Tallahassee, and I also co-own the local record store in town, Retrofit Records. I also currently play in a punk band called MYAKKA.

I've been into metal since I was younger, when my father let me have the copies of METALLICA and SLAYER tapes he found in his thrift store. I will admit, I haven't consistently been passionate about metal. There have been plenty of times where I have been turned off by the edgy behavior of metal fans and bands. Most recently, I felt repulsed and unsafe because of some misogynist comments made by fans at a CANNIBAL CORPSE and OBITUARY. In much, much cruder words, these men were wondering out loud why there weren't more women at the show. Can you guess why there weren't more women there? More so than the gory or blasphemous imagery and lyrics from the bands, comments like these have in the past made me feel more grossed out by metal. The comments I mentioned above put me on a nearly month long kick of nothing but punk to cleanse that shit out of my ears.

This column won't let shit like that slide though. I plan on holding bands and releases to the same level of scrutiny that many of the punk bands face here in *MRR*. From my personal experience, the metal scene in general can be a less inclusive place than the punk scene. I hope to fight that as much as possible with this column. Metal, just like punk, tends to be very anti-establishment, but it is possible to be anti-establishment without holding problematic or fucked-up worldviews. So I will avoid covering bands that hold those ideals and ideologies.

Before I proceed to the reviews, I would like to thank Stephen Shrewsbury for the incredible header for this column. I absolutely love listening to new music, and I would rather focus more on smaller bands than bigger ones. So, if you play in a metal band (especially if you are LGBT or a POC), send copies of your new releases to deathpoemrecs@gmail.com. Feel free to message me to shoot the shit, too.

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D.S.S. – *Criminal Witchcraft* CS (Nihil Verum Nisi Mors): How long has it been since Midnight has put out anything? A year? Well if you're craving some old school sounding black / speed metal, this demo from New Jersey's D.S.S. should satisfy your needs. D.S.S. is part of a crew of New Jersey metal bands that's been putting out astounding music lately. Members of this band play in the incredible DEATH FORTRESS and SIEGE COLUMN, both of which are totally worth your time. For this tape, picture a way more technically accomplished VENOM and you'll get the picture. The four original songs on this tape are incredible and totally worthy of praise. Each song is chock full of great riffs and solid guitar solos, yet also grimey enough to add that old school feel. The tape ends with a cover of W.A.S.P.'s classic "Animal (Fuck Like A Beast)." Given that almost all of the VENOM worship bands try to be as sleazy as possible (I'm looking at you, ABIGAIL and SHITFUCKER), I'm surprised that there aren't more covers of this song. But do we need a cover of this song? What's shocking about a male masturbation fantasy at this point?

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TEITANBLOOD – *Accursed Skin* (Norma Evangelium Diaboli): Ever since the release of their debut album *Seven Chalices* back in 2009, Spain's TEITANBLOOD has been at the forefront of the current black / death scene. Their music is a writhing, chaotic mass of filth and grime that is both totally alien and yet also easily recognizable. Much like their sonic ancestors in BEHERIT and ARCHGOAT, the two songs on here are both chock full of riffs that are both nasty and heavy while also maintaining a dense, ritualistic atmosphere. While both of the tracks on this 12" are over ten minutes long, each one has enough variation to keep your attention going the entire way. The tracks vary from a blasting murk to funereal dirges. Hell, there's even a brief moment during the second track, "Sanctified Dysecdysis" where there is a pogo beat! The most impressive feat of this EP (and all of their other recordings so far) is how well they maintain this mood. No matter what part of the EP you are listening to, if you close your eyes, it's easy to imagine yourself in the midst of a satanic mass.

Eternal Champion – *The Armor of Ire* (No Remorse): This is a bit older than the other records I've reviewed here, but it's just so killer that I absolutely had to feature it. Power metal has gained a bad reputation among most extreme metal fans. They tend to characterize it as metal's dweeby little sibling. The truth is...they aren't wrong. But that's no reason to just throw power metal aside entirely! So much of power metal is obsessed with the same sort of things that have been circulating in popular culture for forever—dragons, valor, dastardly deeds, and whatever sort of thing you can read about in *Lord of the Rings* and *Conan*.

But there's so much more to power metal than that! At its best, it's just as aggressive and powerful as any old speed or thrash album.

Eternal Champion carries the torch for power metal into 2016 with such total ferocity that I hope it causes more bands to follow suit. There's no soft synthesizer touches here, just pure, heavy guitar riffs à la early JAG PANZER or OMEN. Some part of the quality of this album has to come from the band's pedigree—members play in POWER TRIP, IRON AGE, and COLD WORLD. But none of those bands have written a song as catchy as the lead-off track to the album, "I Am The Hammer." It's got it all: references to non-existent nations, wizards, war, and a chorus that will get stuck in your head for a long time. The rest of the songs on the album aren't nearly as catchy, but they are still chock full of great riffs and hooks. Check this out even if you don't play Dungeons & Dragons.

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TOMB MOLD – *The Moulting* CS (self-released): TOMB MOLD should win an award for most accurate band name. Hot off the heels of their *The Bottomless Perdition* demo released earlier this year, TOMB MOLD have decided to bludgeon us with yet another absolutely stunning demo. This is old school death metal worship that accurately nails the gross, putrid feeling that the best death metal has. That is to say, there's no excessive technical bullshit here. This demo is all about mood, and that mood is dying to death and falling through hell into another layer of hell. In other words, this is the real fucking deal. Check this out if you love old Finndeath like CONVULSE, and go see this band if you live in Toronto.

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COUGH – *Sigillum Luciferi* (Forcefield): COUGH emerged from the dense bongwater surrounding Richmond, Virginia about eleven years ago and have been slowly churning out some of the best modern stoner doom. They came about around the same time as other Richmond doom bands WINDHAND (with whom they share a member) and INTER ARMA, both of whom have arguably gained more acclaim and fame in the underground. All three of these bands released their debut albums on the Forcefield record label before signing onto Relapse Records for their sophomore releases. And now, after COUGH has issued their third album (*Still They Pray*, which also rips!), Forcefield has thankfully repressed and reissued COUGH's debut, *Sigillum Luciferi*, on vinyl.

Now I know a lot of y'all punks out there might have immediately turned up your noses at the mention of bongwater and stoner metal, but let me tell you—this is atypical stoner metal. So much stoner metal sounds like a blues rock record played at 16rpm, but not COUGH. Sure, COUGH is slow as shit, but most of their music avoids the detuned blues rock trappings of their peers. In other words, while this is music to take drugs to, this ain't for your typical SLEEP-loving hippie. *Sigillum Luciferi* has more in common with early sludge bands like GRIEF or NOOTHGRUSH. The record doesn't vary its sound at all—it's all one slow, trudging march into tar. Put it on, roll up a joint, and slow mosh across your living room.

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It's January, which, every year without fail, means another pile of records that I picked up in December that would have otherwise probably made it onto the year-end top ten list that I sent off into the ether just a few weeks prior. Better late than never, let's get into it…

After a pair of excellent demo cassettes in 2015, Scotland's VITAL IDLES are back with their first vinyl outing, a two-song 7" courtesy of new blog-turned-label Not Unloved. A-side "My Sentiments" might have been my favorite track on the band's first tape, a perfect contemporary distillation of the ecstatically raw post-punk made by early '80s genius women on the PETTICOATS / RAINCOATS axis. Take some affectless vocals and off-kilter lyrics ("*thanks a lot / no, really, thanks for coming / I'm glad you liked it / and I'm glad you came*"), needling threadbare guitar, insistently bashed drums and repetitive, propulsive bass lines, then knot it all together and I'm pretty much guaranteed to swoon every time, but it helps that VITAL IDLES do this sort of thing as perfectly as anyone this side of the *Wanna Buy A Bridge?* compilation. On the B-side, the UK DIY influence gets shifted forward a few years to the C86 era with a slightly reworked version of "The Garden" (also from the first tape), which adds some melancholic trumpet and violin to the original's blueprint of skeletal, tangled pop in the tradition of fellow Scots the PASTELS. Rumor has it that those demo cassettes are finally back in print now, too—pick them up with the single while you have the chance. (Not Unloved, notunloved.bandcamp.com)

Lise Sutter and Charlotte Mermoud seem to be responsible for a modern coldwave empire of sorts in Switzerland right now. Between the two of them, they're responsible for about half a dozen great records that appeared toward the end of last year, including a pair from MARAUDEUR, which began as Sutter's solo home-taping project and after some self-released cassettes now exists as a full-fledged band for live gigs with Mermoud filling the slot of second bassist. On her two-song flexi 7" on the French label Gone With The Weed, the moody "Night 1" occupies the margins between the darkly dramatic Neue Deutsche Welle femme-punk of MALARIA and the sparse '80s minimal wave of bands like CRASH COURSE IN SCIENCE, with icy monotone vocals over an incessant synth buzz and sinister-sounding bass intersecting with metronomic drum beats, while "Bored By Devotion" channels the staggered chants and angular, intertwining bass rhythms of DELTA 5 at their most urgent and frenetic. Then there's a split 10" with PURPUR SPYTT, which is actually Mermoud's own one-woman project cut from the same MARAUDEUR cloth of clattering drums (both human and machine) and killer infinite loop bass lines. While Merge Records were reissuing and repackaging that (admittedly wonderful) SNEAKS LP in 2016, PURPUTT SPYTT were doing the SNEAKS thing just as successfully as (if not better than) SNEAKS, knocking out a handful of songs perfectly suited to getting bodies on the dancefloor at the post-punk discotheque. Fiercely hooky and elastic bass, flashes of staccato single-note guitar, completely brilliant in its simplicity. (Gone With The Weed, gonewiththeweed.bandcamp.com / Le Syndicat Des Scorpions, lesyndicatdesscorpions.bandcamp.com)

Also worth mentioning is the excellent debut single from Sutter's trans-continental duo COUTEAU LATEX (with USELESS EATERS's Seth Sutton), which is more indebted to classic '80s French electro-punk in the KAS PRODUCT / CHARLES DE GOAL vein than the sort of 21st century "synthed by death" garage racket that the Goner Records logo on the record might suggest (LOST SOUNDS, et al). "Hostile Environment" and "Morphée" both feature cavernously echoed vocals *en français*, throbbing bass, and a wash of paranoid synth that could have been lifted directly from some long-lost dystopian sci-fi / future shock film—think the *Liquid Sky* soundtrack playing at 45 instead 33. (Goner Records, couteaulatex.bandcamp.com)

While they haven't been nearly as prolific as some of the other labels that have made

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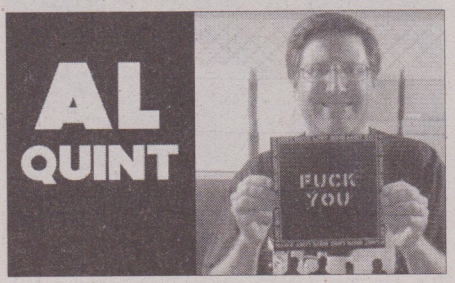
names for themselves in the past few years for reissuing long out-of-print post-punk oddities, Bunkerpop's modest catalog (four records in the past seven or so years) definitely supports that old "quality of quantity" argument. Continuing their reverent preservation of the early '80s Nederpunk underground after a pair of COÏTUS INT. reissues, they've gone even deeper into the archives with their latest release, an LP reissue of *True Love Never Dies*, a hyper-obscure 1983 cassette from post-punk provocateurs AHOE-AHOEA. There's definitely some trace fingerprints of the more-or-less coexistent spiky, minimalist Dutch anarcho-punk of the EX (at least in their earliest incarnation) and the RONDOS here, but AHOE-AHOEA could have just as easily fit into the unpolished DIY noise-making scene that was thriving just across the North Sea in the UK at the time—think SWELL MAPS at their most linear, or subterranean small-run-single weirdos like the DISCO ZOMBIES or TAKE IT collected on any number of *Messthetics* compilations. In addition to the sort of standard lyrical concerns that you'd expect from a scrappy punk band fitting into that whole lineage (a song called "Terminal Boredom" leads into one called "Overhousing" here), there's also a pitch-black, Mark E. Smith-esque sense of humor at play that sets AHOE-AHOEA apart from some of their more dour contemporaries. Case in point: "I Fell Tower" starts out with one of those tried and true choppy post-punk rhythms propped up by a cyclical, rubbery bass line and drum beats that snap like a steel trap, and ends with a dryly-delivered détournement of the defining *"don't push me / 'cause I'm close to the edge"* line from Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five's "The Message" (which was released barely a year before this tape was recorded!). Truly amazing stuff, and Bunkerpop really deserve a nice fruit basket or something for rescuing this one from the black hole of time. (Bunkerpop, ahoe-ahoea.bandcamp.com)

On the subject of recent reissues of 1980s Euro post-punk, *Listening Comprehension (1980-1982)* is the new anthology LP collecting the lone 1980 single and eight previously unreleased tracks from Sweden's HÖRFÖRSTÅELSE, who drew from a lot of the same ramshackle, Rough Trade-backed art-punk influences as AHOE-AHOEA. The slashing guitar and bass-oriented disco-not-disco vibe on songs like "Sexton Pulsar" and "Inte Min Bag" both sound like they could have been the product of one the more dub / funk-influenced late '70s / early '80s UK bands like GANG OF FOUR or A CERTAIN RATIO, at least after a crash course in the Swedish language and the acquisition of some faulty secondhand synths. They're no party band, though—"Inte Så Lätt" starts out with the sort of sneering KBD attitude and amateurishly scratchy guitar that you'd expect from a band with a single in Johan Kugelberg's top 100 DIY singles list, and ends with the sort of hypnotic keyboard drone that clearly connects the dots between HÖRFÖRSTÅELSE and early '80s Swedish electro-punk legends KITCHEN AND THE PLASTIC SPOONS (with whom they shared a drummer). A gloriously messy, skronky DIY essential. (Manufactured Recordings, horforstaelse.bandcamp.com)

Say hey! Analog: Erika Elizabeth / 2545 E. Burnside Street #203 / Portland, OR 97214 / USA, digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds: futuresandpasts.org



ONE-OFFS, LOST GEMS AND THE LIKE

I recently engaged in an online discussion of lesser-known, perhaps semi-obscure (or completely obscure) 7"s from the UK in the late '70s / early '80s. I know the *Killed By Death* thing has been done to death (pun intended), and I'm sure some of these songs might not be as far under the radar as I think but it's always a fun topic and maybe you'll want to seek these out. It's certainly easy enough these days, as I was able to find all of these on YouTube. All of these songs are what I often refer to as mixtape favorites, songs that have been embedded into my brain since taping them off the radio over 35 years ago at this point (yikes!). And I was able to score quite a few of them in the 99 cent bin (or at least fairly cheaply) at late, lamented stores like New England Music City in Kenmore Square in Boston and Discount Records in Harvard Square in Cambridge. Ah, those were the days. You kids have it so easy now. I suppose I should punctuate that with a "get off my lawn!" coda.

The RINGS were a band with Twink, who played drums for '60s garage legends the TROGGS and then the PINK FAIRIES in the early-to-mid '70s (you might know their song "Do It," which was covered by Henry Rollins). Twink was out front for this unit and their single "I Wanna Be Free / Automobile" was good stripped-down punk with a pub rock flavor. The lyrics for "Automobile" are a mere two lines—*"I wanna get you in my automobile / do you remember when we were crazy."* Two of the RINGS, Alan Shaw and Rod Latter, started the MANIACS after that band's implosion, and came up with a great, if instantly-dated dose of punk energy for "Chelsea '77." The boisterous guitar line that introduces the song, along with Shaw's enthusiastic vocals, punctuated by an assortment of *"EEYAY-EE-EYAY"*s *"EE-YOW"*s and *"CH-CH-CH-CHELSEA!"*s really make the song. Shaw is a punk lifer, having played with the likes of the DAMNED and their original guitarist Brian James over the years.

I mentioned the pub rock influence for the RINGS song. A number of early punk musicians spent time slogging it out in the pubs, playing revved-up, R&B-inspired, back-to-basics rock'n'roll before donning their pogo shoes. Veteran guitarist Chris Spedding teamed up with former pub rockers the VIBRATORS in 1977 for the irresistible "Pogo Dancing." That generation's version of "The Twist"? Well, the single didn't exactly climb the charts and perhaps it's a bit of a novelty song but also a damned catchy one.

You can feel the sneer coming through the speakers when listening to the USERS' "Sick Of You" and its D-side "I'm In Love With Today." Released on Raw Records, which unleashed a handful of memorable singles, this was the cream of the crop. The whipsnap guitars and attitudinal vocals have more of a *Raw Power*-era STOOGES flavor. Pure nastiness. "Sick Of You" did appear on the first *Killed By Death* comp, Future UK SUBS bassist Alvin Gibbs played in a later lineup of this band.

The SUBS weren't the UK SUBS, but a group of Scottish punks who did a one-off single for Stiff Records, "Gimme Your Heart." Starting with an incessant drumbeat and gang vocals chanting the chorus, the track is full of both venom and tunefulness. It's hard not to love any song that starts with a line like *"livin' around here makes me wanna throw up."*

APB were also a Scottish band and played mainly post-punk / funk / dance music that wasn't all that scintillating, save the tense "Talk To Me," from their second 7". Their first single was a lot different, though—a total poppy / punky earworm from 1981 called "Chain Reaction." Bouncy and buzzing, with an inescapable chorus hook and even a partially-spoken part where bassist / vocalist Iain Slater sounds a bit like Groundskeeper Willie from the Simpsons. Maybe I shouldn't bring that up because my *MRR* compatriot and native Scotsman Allan McNaughton reacted rather negatively when I mentioned it before.

His words were, "Watch it, bub!" You'll be singing this one all day.

I'd imagine quite a few of you have heard of the LURKERS but their bass player Arturo Bassick left the band early on and started his own project PINPOINT, who released a few singles and an album in '79 / '80. "Richmond" was the first and the best, another song that sounded inspired by pub rock as well as *Spiral Scratch*-era BUZZCOCKS. B-side "Love Substitute" has a similar sharpness, throwing in a nice little guitar freakout. Arturo eventually returned to the LURKERS as a vocalist and "Richmond" became part of that band's repertoire.

Before Ian Page (*neé* Paine) and Dave Cairns donned their sharp suits for mod-revivalist band SECRET AFFAIR, they played in the NEW HEARTS and released a nice piece of power pop / punk called "Just Another Teenage Anthem." Plaintive, yearning vocals, punctuated by some "oooo-oooohs" and a little jangle in the guitars. There was an anthology that included their two 7"s and a lot of unreleased tracks that came out in 2009.

Ian North played in mid '70s NYC glam-pop band MILK 'N COOKIES, before moving to the UK and starting a punk band called NEO. There was only one single, 1978's "Tran-Sister." An intense track with striking guitar lines and a dark undertow and I suppose it could be considered more new wave than punk, but no matter—it's a good one. The chorus has the line *"television on the radio"* and I've always wondered if the band TV ON THE RADIO got their name from that song. Probably not, but that was the first thing I thought of when hearing the latter's name. And what I've heard from that band can't touch this single.

The late Ian Lowery played in a few bands that didn't really fit a specific category and they tend to be overlooked a bit. The WALL came first. Lowery wasn't in the band all that long but he hung around long enough to sing on their first two singles. "Exchange / Kiss The Mirror" was the second one and both songs are good bashers in a RUTS vein, albeit without the rhythmic subtleties of the latter. After Lowery left the WALL, he found himself in SKI PATROL, a post-punk unit who recorded for Malicious Damage, the label that released early records by KILLING JOKE. The debut, "Everything Is Temporary / Silent Scream" has a post-punk ominousness and the jarring jitter continues for "Driving," the B-side of their second single "Agent Orange." That track marks a departure—a slow, steady buildup starting with a pulsating bass-line, adding guitar and synth shadings (played by Jaz from KILLING JOKE) as the volume steadily increases and the tone becomes increasingly desperate until there's a blood-curdling scream that gets abruptly cut off. Quite a striking song.

FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

I always thought the BAD NOIDS had a few screws loose, especially when seeing them live and their singer set his hair on fire, made an awful joke about the Boston Marathon bombings, and jumped on my head. Anyway, on their latest 7" *Doggie Bag World*, they continue to ply loopy-sounding punk slop. "Into The Future" is some CRIME-inspired rawk while, on the flip, they rant'n'rave their way through two quickies. They'd probably be at home on Lumpy. (Feel It, feelitrecordshop.com)

How did that NIRVANA song go? Just because you're paranoid don't mean they're not after you? I know they got that from somewhere else but I digress. POOR LILY's latest full-length (their third overall) *Dirt On Everyone* is a concept album about NSA surveillance and it plays as one long piece and the digital download isn't divided into individual tracks. It's not the type of record where you can drop the needle anywhere. The only way is to hear it from the beginning. As usual, they navigate through a dynamic and complex musical post-punk / rock / hardcore domain, as one composition flows into another. No hooks, so to speak, but an attention-grabbing sound and, in this era of Wikileaks, Ed Snowden and possible manipulation of the election, it's hard not to feel as though everyone is under constant surveillance, where whatever nefarious entity you can think of has "dirt on everyone." The album comes with a collage-style booklet that's a visual assault, a bombardment of disjointed words and imagery, although there's no missing the point of the Uncle Sam parody that says "You Got Nothing To Hide Until You Do." A riveting dystopian musical nightmare. (TV-Mayor, poorlily.com)

Another band playing in a post-punk vein with a strong lyrical bent is the REACHAROUNDS. Their album *Hunter Gatherer* brims with a kinetic energy and a lot of rhythmic muscle. An instrumentally dexterous unit providing the soundscape for brash vocal emanations and pointed lyrics that ruminate on life's day-to-day struggles, getting more direct with the anti-police tirade of "I Can't Breathe" (the title comes from when Eric Garner was murdered by police in NYC). Stirring energetic post-punk / hardcore drawing from the well of the BIG BOYS and some late '80s DC hardcore and even a touch of MISSION OF BURMA in spots. The blunt production, emphasizing the bottom end, really enhances the music's power. (511 E. Edgewood, Springfield, MO 65807, alwaysgodown.bandcamp.com)

From Buffalo, ALPHA HOPPER's sound is a potent mesh of post-punk, grind, and heavier impulses. Their *Last Chance Power Drive* album is loud and intense, with guitar lines that weave an often-nightmarish tapestry and that's reinforced with a rhythmic power-boost (given the space exploration theme, I'm not being very clever, am I?). Irene Rekhviashvili's vocals have the same sarcastic timbre as Natalie from NOTS. Songs like "Launch Pad Blues" and "Chief Of The Edge" have a NOMEANSNO-sounding fury. Music to shake up your senses. (One Percent Press, PO Box 279, Buffalo, NY 14213-0279, onepercentpress.com)

WETBRAIN's latest is a five-song, self-titled 7" and it provides another heady dose of Clevo HC. Not as blown-out or raw-sounding as the old-time purveyors of Cleveland noise but these are still throttling songs with hot guitar licks. If there's any sort of theme, it's how people get anesthetized by their social media while staying in the dark about drone strikes and other political malfeasance. Cynical punk for cynical times. (Residue, residue-records.com)

The rampaging drums for "Boom Boom" introduce *Power To Exist*, the first OMEGAS album in over five years and, as always, they uncork thorny, high-energy hardcore in brief flashes of fury. Save the nearly three-minute creepy crawl of "Duster's Blues," only one other song breaks the 90 second mark. An off-kilter ride that shifts easily from one tempo to another—kinetic thrash, floor-pounding savagery, and good ol' rock'n'roll fodder, delivered with lurking around the corner, knife-behind-the-back menace. (Beach Impediment, beachimpedimentrecords.bigcartel.com)

A couple of demos from Melbourne, Australia to wrap things up. A.D. SKINNER put out two of my favorite tapes in recent years (four songs from one of them were also pressed on a 7"). Rough slam-bang punkrocknrollin' and this recording sounds more blown-out than in the past. In fact, the band sound meaner than before, with a real chip-on-shoulder fervor, moving a bit away from their previous EDDY CURRENT / UV RACE hybrid. Totally stomping. (Unwound, unwoundrecords.com)

In a different vein, UBIK have something of an anarcho-punk flavor but the songs are quick-paced and fired-up sounding, underpinned by propulsive bass, and accompanied by Ash's assertive vocals. "Simple Thing," in particular, boils over with a forceful energy. Hope to hear more. (ubikpunk.bandcamp.com)

While I've been working on the reviews for this column, I've also been perusing *Spoke*, a coffee table tome by Scott Crawford, who produced the *Salad Days* DC hardcore documentary and has been immersed in

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the scene since he was a pre-adolescent in the early '80s, going to shows and publishing *Metrozine*. Subtitled *Images and Stories from the 1980s Washington DC Punk Scene*, the book provides a primer to that city's legendary punk legacy. Intended as a companion piece to the documentary, *Spoke* is done in an oral history format, with quotes taken from the film, accompanied by striking black and white photography and a clean layout. The narrative is a little choppy but you do get different perspectives—I especially liked the candor from the various members of DAG NASTY. Done chronologically, starting with BAD BRAINS and the HarDCore bands, through the "Revolution Summer" period—EMBRACE, RITES OF SPRING, GRAY MATTER and BEEFEATER—and ending where things got much more diverse—FUGAZI, of course, bands like IGNITION and SWIZ taking a page from the earlier era, the more rock-oriented, melodic sounds of JAWBOX, SOULSIDE and SHUDDER TO THINK, the provocative, unclassifiable NATION OF ULYSSES. Band members, photographers, label people and fans get their say, including an outsider perspective from the ubiquitous Thurston Moore. It's not a comprehensive history—that's been covered in other books—but *Spoke* works very well as a visual artifact. (Akashic Books, akashicbooks.com)

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I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though.*
(...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")

Parenting Question: My daughter keeps listening to the Ramones, but she's listening to not the best songs. Do I go in her room and direct her to the earlier stuff? She's put it on in the car when I was inside my son's school dropping him off, and I let the first couple songs go, but then I was like "Uh, hold on you'll like these ones" and put on older stuff, but now that I dropped her off I feel like I overstepped. Like I want to let her discover things on her own, but I also don't personally want to hear those "newer" terrible songs. I don't want to take away the joy for her of finding her own stuff that she likes…like it's exciting when you dig into stuff and find things you think are awesome. I want her to like figure out who she is and what she likes, but I also feel like I could give her the Cliff's Notes to awesome bands, but I don't want to take away the magic. It's not a *true* dilemma, I just don't want to discount what she wants if she *really* thought those songs we were listening to were cool. Also, like how do you reconcile the version of mom that bakes all the Christmas cookies and goes to parent conferences and won't let you watch shows because they're "too graphic" with the picture of the girl at a punk show with a beer? It's probably confusing.

If it makes you feel any better, I think every mom is supposed to hate the music their child puts on in the car, so it sounds like you're getting the regular parental experience, except in this case, it happens to be dressed up as the ghost of your own past. And one easy way to reconcile those two images for your daughter definitely would be if punk mom starting regulating the things she is choosing to listen to even if they are, in her opinion, way better than the stuff the daughter is currently listening to. Guh, that's sooo regular non-punk mom! It seems like everyone who has a teenage *Becoming a Punk* story *does* have a pivotal moment where they meet an older person who puts them on their path though. Sometimes that person tells you about bands that you hadn't heard of before which in turn change your life, or they take you to your first punk shows, or they give you a cool zine, or influence you politically, but whatever it is, it usually comes from some person who has been doing the punk thing way longer than they have. For me it was having an older brother and his friends who were mostly metalheads, who gave me my first punk records, but I imagine that it's harder to be the influencer if you're the mom. Obviously this depends on the actual type of mother-child relationship you have with each other, and those things can be all over the map, but moms are historically uncool even when they're not. I mean, let's face it, they're generally even seen as the reason for the rebellion punk offers, used as an attempt to differentiate themselves from their square ass homelives. For a specific age group, an example of this would be having watched the tv show *My So-Called Life* as a young person and experienced Angela's mom as a nagging, over protective, life ruiner, and later, as an adult, to have revisited the show, and realized that Angela's mom tried purely to maintain a relationship with her daughter while also providing her with the stable home life she needed to allow Angela to dabble in that alternative lifestyle she would never have to commit to. I imagine that if Angela's mom had given her a copy of Ramones *Road to Ruin* to replace her copy of *Mondo Bizarro* at that point, the only thing that would've really suffered would've been Angela's budding relationship with the Ramones. Not to say you won't have any opportunity to get good music into their hands, or to create punk influence. You can listen to the good shit around the house or in the car, you can leave your records laying around where they can be discovered, you can give holiday gift cards to the local record store, you can even, I don't know, get a gift subscription to *Maximum Rocknroll*? Figuring everything out will a slow and rewarding process if she's in it for the long haul, and I'm sure it'll get worse before it gets better, but even if she doesn't end up being a punk, because you were too overbearing or if she's going through the fabled "phase", that's fine too because, like, that probably means she'll rebel against her upbringing by becoming a doctor or some kind of professional or something. And she'll still have to take care of you when you're old. As long as she doesn't become a cop, it'll all work out.

Send a text / phone call to 510-585-HELP with all your questions, opinions, and pranks to be answered within the pages of Maximum Rocknroll*! Very exciting…Send in email form to ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.*

Anyone who was around in the '80s will probably agree that the most popular punk band in the US in those days were the Dead Kennedys. While their popularity has since declined, no one can deny the huge influence this band had over the scene in its formative years. We think of hardcore as a reaction to the conservative revolution of Reagan and Thatcher. However, it is important to

remember that punk started during the so-called *malaise* of the Carter Administration but was shoved kicking and screaming to a more radical outlook when America took a turn to the far right under Ronald Reagan. The process was almost the same in Britain, as the rise of Thatcher coincided with the explosion of what we now call UK82 second wave Punk and Anarcho-Punk. The Dead Kennedys breakout single was *California Uber Alles*. I would be willing to bet that almost everyone who was punk in the '80s had a copy of this single or the song on a mixtape. The original version of this song lampooned "Governor Moonbeam" Jerry Brown, equating his spacey new ageism to a Trojan Horse for fascism. From today's standpoint this kind of critique registers as a bizarre form of satire. It was after the election of Reagan that the Dead Kennedys re-recorded this song and released it under the title "We've Got a Bigger Problem Now." Reagan's election was a shock to everyone in America who thought that Watergate had discredited the right for a generation. Instead it was a mere four years of Carter before Reagan took power promising to make America great again. The Dead Kennedys equated Reagan and the country's turn to the right with the rise of a new fascist order. In those days there were many who saw the turn to the right as the fulfillment of George Orwell's prophetic novel *1984* and these themes were frequent in both records and artwork of the time. Thankfully, America did not go down the road to full blown fascism in the Reagan / Bush years.

Now, a generation later, America has turned even farther to the right than anyone could have imagined in those days. Many people, including myself, who live in progressive urban areas found it hard to believe that there are still enough angry white people in America to put in power a regime of the far-right. As I said last month, I have lived under many Republican presidents and don't see a major difference between either of the major political parties when it comes to challenging the relationship of labor and capital or who controls the commanding heights of the economy. We have just grown used to a system where the rich get rich and the poor get poorer no matter who is in office. However, we have now launched into some uncharted and unpredictable territory. At best, we will just get four to eight years of programs that benefit the ruling elite. Even for a hardened cynic like myself, we must recognize that after years of malaise we've got a bigger problem now. Because the worst-case scenario now really is the kind of fascist America the Dead Kennedys were talking about.

Let me be clear—I don't think we are living under a fascist regime yet. However, I think there is a distinct possibility that our country could turn even further to the right and embrace an authoritarian regime that would have many commonalities with the fascist movements of the early 20th century. That said, fascism is a historical phenomenon—we are not going to see a recreation of 1920s and 30s fascist movements any more than powdered wigs and pantaloons are going to come back into style. However, the examination of history does often show patterns, and the patterns that emerge are sometimes disturbing. Again, I'm not saying we are for sure heading down the road to a Fourth Reich, but I will say the *worst case scenario* is some kind of neo-fascist order in the USA, and it's my view that you should always have a back-up plan for the worst case scenario.

The current backlash against liberalism, women's rights, civil rights, and the like, reminds me a lot of the way the Nazis used to criticize the so-called decadent Weimar Republic. I think we can expect a major backlash against any kind of rights recently extended to women, minorities, gays, and lesbians. Furthermore, the general conservative hue and cry about the decline of law and order is a tried-and-true rallying point probably best used in modern memory by Nixon to come to power after the unrest of the'60s. The push for law and order is less about safety from crime and more about putting the poor, minorities, and political dissidents back in their place through repression, overt and otherwise. In those days, it was easy to isolate and repress dissident groups (even the mildest of progressives) by labeling them as communists. Expect to see this same process, just substituting terrorism for communism. I would anticipate a crackdown on groups like Black Lives matter or the Dakota Access Pipeline protest using the rhetoric and imagery of counterterrorism for internal repression. The incoming administration has a massive security state at its disposal with incredible powers of surveillance and repression built up in recent years with very little oversight or criticism from the media or judiciary. The huge resources put into surveillance and control in the name of fighting terrorism can very easily be used to silence political and racial dissent. We have the apparatus of a police state that Hitler or Stalin would have loved. Experience from history shows us that when the police state is turned upon domestic dissent, few inside the state apparatus question or object. Given the compliance of the media, I fear there will be few critical voices if the full machinery of repression is turned first on Muslims, then immigrants, then Black activists. Once the machinery is up and running it will continue to devour opponents of the state.

For me, the most troubling aspects of the new right-wing order is the appeal to racism. Just when many people were thinking that America was entering some kind of post-racial era of tolerance and understanding, a politician has been able to manipulate racial resentment to divide the public into warring tribes and whip up hysteria. This is one of the oldest tricks in the book for an outsider politician to enter the mainstream and control the reins of power. A prime example is post-communist Yugoslavia. Here ethnic groups who had coexisted for many years were suddenly in open warfare with each other due to the manipulation of racial and ethnic hatred by a handful of mid-level bureaucrats from the security apparatus who saw a chance to use racial divisions to catapult themselves into power. We see many similar crises around the world where racial and ethnic hatred are inflamed to keep a group of people in power who in times of peace and prosperity would be mid-level managers at best. Whipping up hysteria against Muslims and immigrants as well as Black Lives Matter activists could unleash very dangerous forces that would be hard to control. The idea of rounding up and deporting millions of immigrants or minorities would require the apparatus of a police state beyond anything yet seen in this country. The Big Brother of state power would require many Little Brothers such as militias, informants, and the other toadies of authoritarianism who become empowered with this kind of regime. We can already see some of these groups in action with the right-wing militias that patrol the Mexican border and the internet trolls of the alt-right. It is the stated aim of many on the extreme right to provoke a race war in America. While many domestic terrorists have carried out acts of terror meant to provoke such a race war, all have failed. However, I would not rule out the kind of racial unrest this country saw in the 1960s re-emerging at the provocation of empowered groups on the extreme right. While a full-on race war seems unthinkable, there is definitely a radical fringe that has now moved into the mainstream, who may commit or provoke many acts towards this end. Note how overnight fringe Neo-Nazi groups have been repackaged as seemingly innocuous "White Nationalists" and their program is now receiving major media coverage and legitimization.

I think it is highly likely that we will have some kind of war in the next few years. My only hope is that it is a limited war rather than a full-on nuclear slugfest. When politicians' ratings begin to fall, they frequently reach for military adventurism as a way to boost their approval and silence dissent. Recently Putin has played this game well, and the Invasion of Grenada is a textbook case of a politician whipping up a military conflict out of nothing.

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I think the right has been spoiling for a war with Iran for many years and I would not be surprised to see this long-running crisis turn into an open conflict, especially if the US economy takes a turn for the worse and promises made to improve the economy do not bear fruit. Again, the machinery of the police state and the hysteria of the war on Islam and terrorism can easily be turned against anti-war activists and anyone else critical of the establishment. There is great precedent for this in the FBI's COINTELPRO program and investigations of peace activists in the 1980s. Even if law-abiding activists are not rounded up and jailed, I think it will be easy to silence or freeze out dissent through harassment and intimidation. This could take the form of bankrupting activists with frivolous court cases and legal fees and the kind of cyber intimidation engaged in by the so-called alt-right such as denial-of-service attacks and exposing personal information and low-level harassment. This kind of harassment often leads those with anything to lose to keep their mouths shut and not protest or object as conditions around them deteriorate.

These are just a few of the nightmare scenarios that could happen here. Perhaps things will be much the same as they are with a few tweaks, like legalized pot and illegalized abortions, or perhaps we are standing at the door to a long slide into a neo-fascist police state. Either way, we've got a bigger problem now.

"Living in a bedsit
Bunking on a tube train
Sleeping all day long
'Cuz you've got no work
And you got no life,
You just sit at home and watch television
Living with unemployment"
—The Oppressed doing the Newtown Neurotics doing the Members, "Solitary Confinement" as "Living with Unemployment"

Not This Shirt Asshole, My Yellow Shirt

Aloha you A-holes! This month's column is brought to you by the dream and the curse: Unemployment, AKA my need of shelter versus my love of slippers. The long stare at an empty day. The movie I was working on wrapped, so now I'm spending my days wearing sweatpants and bummy t-shirts (how do I still own anything from Hook-Ups?!) and getting reacquainted with TV from the '90s (yinz ever seen *Buffy*? It's aight!) None of this falls under the purview of "Skinhead" and I've already received a letter of condemnation from the Skinhead and Allied Oi! Listeners and Appreciators Association (part of the AFL-C-Oi!-O...cough...). I've got a beard right now too (a cry for help), but we won't tell them about that transgression.

In my downtime I'll have to live vicariously thru Oi!'s acceptance (and fetishization) of hard work. If you're out there toiling in the salt mines (or the Whole Foods) of whatever backwater you call home (Hayward, CA? All of New Jersey?), take comfort in knowing that I'm bundled up in a Slanket dozing on a couch with a cat sleeping on my chest while episodes of *Quantum Leap* play endlessly, one after another after another. This mac'n'cheese is for you fam! There's a harsh wind blowing this month (couch-farts) and its name is Oi!

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RED ALERT – *The Oi! Singles 1980-1983* LP (Common People): This is an amended reissue of a CD Captain Oi! Records put out in '95 (before you were born, punk!). As the title says, this LP contains RED ALERT's first four EPs, and the six-song 12" *There's a Guitar Burning!* plus demo versions of "SPG" and "I Tore Your Picture Up." It's a full LP and you get a clear picture of the band as they progressed over four years. The band's initial release, *Third and Final* EP from 1980, has the boys from Sunderland sounding more like STIFF LITTLE FINGERS than their subsequent material which was released through No Future Records. *In Britain* brings the band more in line with their fellow Oi! / UK82 peers at the time. The songs from that EP are some of RED ALERT's most well-known and appear on a grip of compilations. Along with the title track, "Screaming at the Nation" and "Murder Missile" showcase vocalist Steve "Cast Iron" Smith in all his disgusted slurred glory. The sound on the *City Invasion* EP from '83 is fuller and more polished, possibly on account of the band recording at Utopia Studios who—to their credit—recorded and mastered many of the era's spikiest punks but also ran the boards for JAPAN (ain't nobody care about no JAPAN) and UB40. Still "City Invasion" is a boot-storm-pogo-rager™. Better than most. The LP wraps with *There's a Guitar Burning* which was the band's last recording before they took a hiatus for ten years. To our shaved ears it's nothing we'd call Oi! or UK82. It barely resembles RED ALERT and sounds more akin to TSOL collaborating with RED LONDON (who shared personnel with RED ALERT). There is a precedent of Oi! bands turning to post-punk and *There's a Guitar Burning* adds to it. Necro Nerds should look up the song "Tranquility" for further proof.

Chances are (if you're worth the boots you wear) you already have these songs on your iPod (or you use Spotify like all the other young profeshs). What makes this release worth the scratch is the packaging. Common People Records did a nice job. You get full lyrics and a band history plus some great photos that show the band in their juvenile glory. And if you act fast 100 copies—on white vinyl...meh—include an A2 size poster of the band looking real punk. If you're over thirteen I'm not sure what you do with a band poster...But that's your cross to bear.

All in, this is a worthy purchase and we're glad this collection made it onto a big plastic disc. Fuckin' prestige format!

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DRENCROM SKINS / PROLLIGANS / SANKT OI! – *Gegen Den Zeitgeist* CD (Subcultural): Sorry punks, this one's for skinheads only. Make a run to the pharmacy and re-up your Naloxone scrip (thanks Obama!) and while you're there pick me up some wood tipped Black & Milds. Wine Flavor! OK, they gone? Gurd!

When a member of The Gang brought this over to HQ I was skeptical. A three-way "split" CD of German Oi! is just about the last thing I'd put on a "Wants" list. I don't even have a CD player hooked up to the stereo. I had to load the Acer laptop onto a piano-dolly and cart it into the front room so we could Frankenstein it up to the main HiFi. After nine hours of running cables and waiting for Windows XP to update we got down to business and popped in *Gegen Den Zeitgeist*.

The bands contribute five songs each and thankfully the top cops over at Subcultural Records grouped the tracks by band so the CD plays out like three long EPs. PROLLIGANS are the first in line. Their brand of Deutsche-Oi! is relatively inoffensive to my gentle western ears. Because of all the uvular consonants and Oi!'s general chanty-ness the PROLLIGANS mid-tempo pace makes their songs sounds like beerhall singalongs. On the song "Lasst uns Trinken" they embrace the pop punk aspects of "new Oi!" and go full *Dude Ranch*. Bic your head and shine up your chrome plugs!

SANKT OI! come from the Disney Princess land of Allgäu in southern Germany. These Sauerbraten-boys keep their edges sharp and dip into metal-tinged guitar leads. Again you will find songs sung by what sounds like the entire *biergarten*. Their hit is the five-minute epic "Wir Gegen Alle" which has a strong Viking-rock sound we find pleasing.

Wrapping things up are shaven baddies DRENCROM SKINS. Oi! must give Anthony Burgess another reason to repudiate his most well-known work. But we here among The Gang still love an old fashioned clockwork Oi! band. DRENCROM SKINS kick off their set with their theme song that begins with a sample of Alex entering the Korova Milk Bar (duh) and then blasts into these wrathful words: *"Milk plus velocet, drencrom, synthamesc! / Drencrom Oi! / Drencrom Skinheads / Ultra-violence! / Drencrom Skinheads! / Drencrom Oi!"* Those are the lyrics in total! Good dumb tune. My only complaint is that it goes on for almost four minutes, which is way too long. DRENCROM SKINS are the only band who deviate from their native language, with three of their five tracks in English. As with the other bands, their subject matter mostly deals with drinking, and being a skinhead.

If you're a fan of German Oi! this release is a no-brainer. Head over to Subcultural's website and fork over €12 plus €15(!!) for shipping. That's for us Yanks. If you live in Germany just head on over to your local pretzel, beer, and record stall and pick up a copy. I taped the SANKT OI! and DRENCROM stuff before I gave the CD back. Na Klar!

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LION'S LAW – *From the Storm* LP (Contra): *Putain préparez-vous!* The Parisian playboys are back with their second full-length! This release is slick and recalls the production from Oi!'s previous heyday, the late '90s. It's the "big Oi! sound" that you will find on many records put out by Contra, Randale, Longshot, or Pirate's Press. Not necessarily a bad thing but it makes the eyes roll here at Wilkinsburg HQ. LION'S LAW is a great band though and has the ability to fight thru the mob of mediocrity and emerge near the top of French Oi! With songs titles such as "Give Back the Glory," "Way of Life," "With the Wolves," and "Sons of Oi!" you get an inkling of the ideas contained on *From the Storm*. Wattie's (AKA Victor from RIXE) vocals and presence are a force on their own, while lead guitarist Louis (HARDXTIMES, new KOMINTERN SECT) adds to every song with sharp solos that soar and give LION'S LAW an epic quality. The backing vocals are thick and with the drums give a martial feel to the record.

Serious times produce serious bands and LION'S LAW knows how to convey serious sentiments. Read these lyrics to "The Choice" for an inward glance you bums!: *"2016 and it's getting worse / The kids on the street are thinking they are cursed / No hope, no future, no one to trust / Blaming the system cuz they know how it works!"* Reminds us of "Fighting the System" from CRIMINAL CLASS. *From the Storm* is top Oi!

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STOUTS – *Pelos Trilhos Da Velha Sorocaba* CD (The Firm / Rotten / Skin Collector): Alright, the STOUTS are from São Paulo and play Oi! that prominently features an accordion. To be blunt, this hurts my ears. I try not to shit on music for which I lack a cultural context. I'm not Brazilian and if dudes from Brazil want to fuse *forró* with Oi! that's their prerogative (like Bobby Brown). All the same, I got ear-holes and the accordion on *Pelos Trilhos Da Velha Sorocaba* is grating and most of the time discordant. If this was sans accordion it would be bare bones Brazilian Oi! with harsh shouted vocals and a few simple guitar solos. But it's not that. Oi! pitches a big tent (intentional!) but the STOUTS have to play outside. Brazil burn!

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SO WHAT – *Hard Gum* LP (Just Add Water / Surfin' Ki): I'm not sure who brought on the return of street level glam (AKA bovver-rock, proto-Oi!, hard mod, tough soul, yob pop) but it's in worldwide explosion mode. Around these parts we haven't seen any wide trousers or high-heeled DMs (or those floppy hats Riff Raff the cat wore), though it's been a while since I was in Gooski's. The Bay Area however must be chock-a-blocked with be-boppin dummies clapping their hands and stomping their feet cuz Oakland is the place SO WHAT call home.

Hard Gum—as in hard-bubblegum music—takes a slight (my carpenter buddies would say "a CH") deviation from the norm by not simply aping SLADE but also incorporating a fair share of mod and garage sounds into the chugging blues (chug blues!) of junkshop glam. The band describe themselves as "disciples of the EQUALS." There's a good bit of Moog synth and the tempo never goes too far beyond GARY GLITTER's "The Hey Song" (I know it's really called "Rock and Roll Part 2," I've got Wikipedia too, ya dweebs). So if you like the current crop of bands playing all the above genres and enjoy rock'n'roll songs about ladies (seriously, it's like an MTX record) then The Gang recommends you buy a little less yuppie-weed and pick up *Hard Gum* instead. We'd like to read what Kenny Kaos (still the best reviewer) thinks.

We're done! Till next month!

ENDNOTES:

1) AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com is the place to congratulate me on my great taste in music.

2) The band HARD LEFT is actually CHUMBAWAMBA (never forgive them for SKIN DISEASE).

3) Less anyone get confused becuz this column appears in a magazine that has an interview with HARD LEFT (and runs a cover that says "End America"), inside Gang HQ we have a strict no flag burning policy. Outside you can do what you want (cuz of rights an shit) but inside, no sir! The Gang and I greatly (bigly) enjoy America and are glad we live here. DJ KHALID says, "We da best!" and we couldn't agree more. America? We is "we da best." We is.

I'm 30 now. Turned 30 on a night bus traveling home alone, listening to the Fall's *Grotesque*. It's fun how many reviews of the new reissue detail the craziness of this record. For me it's rather entertaining but I can get that I'm in a narrow segment of Fall fans. I encourage everyone to start with this record and maybe be freaked out by the variety of malfunctioning computers bleeping instead of a kick drum. Listening to these country songs mixed with space kraut-rock reminds me to *Up On The Sun*-era by Meat Puppets. Although it's very hard to keep up with this many lyrics as a non-English speaker, recently I sat down to read all the words and the dizzying cavalcade of local references, pop culture, striking irony, conspiracy theory, and enigmatic mumbling goes hand in hand with the never resting, even when it is purposefully boring music.

It is sure a hard work to get through the Fall's discography since it's so large that it creates an expectation from the listeners. Like books; either read the whole thing or do not even start. Don't fall for that! First of all why do you want everything? If you like pseudo-intellectual drunk mumbling to monotonic music, then pick a record from their enormous discography and enjoy it. My current favorites are *Grotesque* and *Extricate*.

Speaking about Madchester and the deskilling of music by machines: I was listening to Throbbing Gristle's *D.O.A: The Third and Final Report* which is an amazing record that swings between being astonishingly beautiful and quite frightening. The context is that people are disappointed in a failed utopia so they turn to machines that no one knows yet, never sure if we can trust them. In most songs the experiment is an experience with these primitive computers. Some notes feel as if they (us) are courageously dipping their toe into darkness since they cannot see where they are stepping and what will happen there. It's harsh, it's dangerous yet taming

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because the conclusion is always: machines are sheer tools, seemingly serving people. An idea that needs to be revisited when in this contemporary age we've turned it around to a level where we integrate our lives into our machines. Now your whole stupid life is in your pocket, and the dependency is to upload and archive more of your forehead in front of gothic buildings, still you do not own Confuse's *Stupid Life* record.

The early digital age's experimental environment is something I search for in music. It's exciting. This is why it is always interesting when someone does not have an absolute clue of what will happen when they start playing their instrument. Digitalism yearns for experiments and improvements, while in music getting better does not always mean to become more digestible. An electronic song from the same year sounds advanced compared to something played with a guitar, especially when it's something as visceral as hardcore or D-beat.

Let's talk good medieval punk music:

Dachau from Finland's oafish hardcore songs are haunted by several disorders and pointless rage while driven by a restless beat. The back of the basement recording quality makes the guitars sound like jets plane drawing circles above your migraine-ridden afternoon, sprinkling cold war paranoia through their songs. (They were featured on the *Propaganda – Russia Bombs Finland* comp, but this awkward raging is about their demo that's floating on the internet, not about the great great Ballaadeja collection). They are so dense but lo-fi, a great opportunity for using your imagination to figure out what is happening. Recommended listening environment is on public transportation where we have even less of an idea what the hell is happening. The vocals are amazing—it doesn't just sound frantic but rather lost in its own madness; it could have been recorded in the raging room of an asylum. The crash and hi-hat-less drums push a primitive proto-music groove. Most of the songs are built up in the same structure which makes listening to them feel like ingesting a blended noise mush, some crazy deformed pulp, embellished by human screams and guitar squeaks. I adore this experience because what is at stake nowadays? Sense, logic, time? They have created a body of work, not a dozen of unique and individual songs; even if this is a rat race of hits, it's not after all. Still the main reason why they are unique is because they are able to write slow paced songs in a way that the tension never gets lost, it only makes their whole sound more nervous.

Takuu is another band from Finland but with amazing hysteric guitars and hyper-active pace. Their riffs are indomitable, even when the drums and bass get lost in a sort of no wave disco territory within a segment of a strange song. But do not be afraid, punx in boots and patched-up coats, Takuu is punk. It is even punker since they only have one recording that is sort of lost and even the reissue is out of print. They remind me of Distress, although their guitars are sharper and use no reverb or chorus pedals. They manage to form punker than punk, ugly hardcore songs into a shape that sounds fresh even in 2017. They can keep it fragile, daring, smart, and fun. The vocals mostly stay in a resigned state—the voice is only raised for the refrains, making all the other parts way more exciting. The mix mostly offers these two elements while the beats are going crazy in the background, noticed only by the subconscious. Takuu should be mentioned among the greatest Finnish bands and they didn't even release a record while they were around.

Another blast from the past is Disorder from the Netherlands, who play bass-heavy post-punk that has guitar parts that sneak all over. They are closer to Rondos than to Jesus and the Gospelfuckers, burning fewer calories with their creative energy. But the creative energy is all over their songs. The fun but threatening collage art that is on the cover is infused into their songs in a way that the mix separates each element from the others, creating a spacey platform for all the shine. Now this could sound like a description for a high-tech jazz-funk infusion record, but in reality Disorder play annoyingly smart punk with vicious guitars and groovy bass. They also carry the we know it better, we know more attitude that coats most of the best bands in their sub-genre and gives the secret society / police / agents feelings to the music. *Fake Heads* is filled with such restrained information, where progressive art regress the state, where charmingly rudimentary punk songs can blow up police cars. Imagine them as a more direct Desperate Bicycles with less adventurous structures but more innovative guitar vortexes.

Ending the nostalgia bullshit, here are some recent cool bands: Båndtvang from Norway play weird, guitar-centric hardcore. It's sounds like a clone pair of Ginns are playing slightly delayed from one another. They kill off the moments that would offer us the chance to catch a breath of air in some spineless riff. Instead, they move forward, never stopping which evaporates any similarities to metal or math-rock riffage, leaving a only a place for noise and disharmony. The thick sound lends to the rock'n'roll aesthetics but it's mutant rock, not dick-slinging motorbike punk. They use English and their own language with a voice that reminds me of Sakevi. They spit on the world.

Петля from Russia released another batch of songs that are purposefully dumb and ignorant in a great way. The vocals sound like someone moaning after having his head smashed on the concrete or waken up from deep drunken sleep to discuss serious politics. The music is urgent, thick punk with a lot of guitars going all over the place, crossing over each other and making zero sense. In this riff-less chaos the vocals steal the show with their theater-sized reverb, but since they are in Russian (a language I don't speak), I can sneak behind the main act and get amazed by the other layers of deconstructed craziness. To confuse you poor readers a bit more, their songs are also catchy—do not except glue-sniffing mutant hardcore.

The rhythm section of Iceland's Dauðyflin has a brilliant fluency that pushes the whole thing forward just as much as it is a fertile ground and solid base for the rest to make whatever they want. The guitars freely rage into some levitating evil fogginess out of which come the threateningly aggressive vocals. This is a brilliant record that is so powerful with its elemental strengths, let them be tangled guitars or rudimentary beats. They summon the ancient rage that makes all music great, from basement rock'n'roll to church burning metal. Dauðyflin is a powerhouse who turn punk into both art and a threat. Do not forget that they use saxophone in one of their songs.

Do you play in a band like these? Are you bored with boring linear riffing? With people telling you what to do and how to act? With bands whose only interesting feature is in their didactic lyrics? With template hardcore? You and your friends are playing the best music in basements and nobody gives a fuck? Send me your music because I want to hear it!

Sometimes I want this column to be a political corner, but that's Lefty's specialty, and he does such a fucking good job of it, so I guess this is a philosophical corner, but I want to make a warmer corner than that. A lot of punks, especially communist punks or some kinds of queer punks and other folks who have been burned by religion, reject spirituality.

Are nearly dogmatic in their anti-dogma. As an anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian, dogma is hard for me to stomach too. But a belief, a kind of radical faith, that is inherently anti-fascist, grateful for the earth, generous towards other beings, and clairvoyant about beauty in the face of so much sludge-soup-ugliness? I have that, and I want to foster that in my comrades and community, no matter how punk as fuck they are. Isn't it optimism and faith that drives punks to make and enjoy strange music and sleep on each other's couches in places they don't know well but believe they could come to love?

All cultures, and fuck, then all subcultures too, have rituals and traditions. It's what aids our memory and our hunger for each other. I try to be jaded sometimes, just for shits, but it doesn't last long. Some things are so predictably horrible they make me laugh, like the dude in the Seahawks jersey using my other wheelchair-dancing friend and I as step stools and shoulders to lean on as he stumbles through the party crowd. Or the fact that white supremacists know how to organize and utilize propaganda too. But many things are so unexpectedly delightful, like new friends seeing you clearly, or people you don't even know capturing a second of your experience or their experience and giving it to you in the gift of a poemsong. On the couch the other night Kate was reading our horoscopes out loud to Tony and I. I usually just read Chani Nicolas because she's political and most daily horoscopes are so bad, so I was skeptical about hearing a different astrologer, especially one called Galactic Rabbit. But Tony's (Cancer) and Kate's (Virgo) were really good, and then it was my turn (Sagittarius) and though I'm usually so eager and willing—it's why I would be a good candidate for somatics or hypnotism or cult membership—I was shaking my head saying, it's not going to be as good as yours. It's not going to make me feel better about the future. But then I'm hearing the words Manhattan diner, and hungover, and the romance and understanding of sharing painspace with your best friend. And I feel captured. In a lovely way. Diners, being from the East Coast, and specifically originally Jersey and later New York, who is like my close yet meanish cousin, are a traditional gathering place of my oldest friends and mine. As a tradition, we have made them ritual, because we believe that they lend our reunions both the seriousness and levity they deserve. Because we keep enjoying our gatherings there, we keep having them.

My horoscope from that cosmic field rodent was about how by creating the spaces we want and need, spaces to feel the things we are feeling, we might have those magical moments which break open the status quo, which lend opportunity where there has been scarcity, which inspire revolutionary shifts in time and space. And fuck it if that isn't something I believe, and always need affirmed. There is a habit amongst punks, of at once vehemently eschewing tradition and subterraneanously carrying it forward without question. What are some punk traditions? Rejecting the mainstream. Fucking off commercial or corporate record labels. Wearing black or brown. White supremacist attitudes. Whites erasing the creative labor of the people of color who invented rock'n'roll. Building spaces, musical or otherwise, for poor people, queer and trans people, and people of color to learn about ourselves and each other. Anarchist bookfairs. Communist bookfairs? Mosh pits. Other cool dances? Hmmm, punk is not really a dance innovator. Seems like an area for development. Throwing viscous fluids on one another during shows if you're happy or mad. Drinking beer. Not drinking beer or any other kind of alcohol. Doing It Yourself. Annoying people. Delighting people. Confusing people. Sitting around fires. Starting fires. Collecting records. Getting and giving tattoos. Piercing stuff. Getting addicted to cigarettes or drugs. Dying and cutting hair weird. Dying young. Never dressing or behaving "your age." Wearing boots. Not bathing. Having dogs. Not believing in domestication. Wearing collars. Only dating each other. Being the scum of the earth. Taking care of each other. Being the downest people on earth. Thinking we're better than other people. Secretly thinking we're shit. Hoping there will be room one day to truly live as we want to. And die as we want to too. Some good things, some terrible things, some neutralish, you had to be there sorts of things.

Tradition is not in and of itself evil or fascist. And not all traditions are worthy of being carried out as rituals. Rituals, like all space affecting and creating practices, require intentionality; they require belief, faith, and some amount of deep feeling—hopefully love, but it can be rage too.

When I left New Jersey, I dropped like feathers, or apples, the traditions which had matted, gone mealy for me. Traditions which weren't working for me with my changing and forming life and self in life were discarded, and the ones I missed, the ones which had been unconsciously feeding my soul as I grew up, were salvaged, were revitalized, ritualized, because I had to lend them intention in order to be the leader of them, since my family of origin was no longer leading me through the steps. I have invented new rituals too, with my new families, and even introduced my older famili(es) to these practices. If a tradition is no longer serving its people (you get to say who the people are, who you want in your community, and rest assured, some traditions will keep people out, for good or for ill), then it must not be treated with the care of a ritual practice. Traditions which might just be unexamined habits, take on the lives of doctrines. And people become dogmatic in their defense of the ugly habits they've learned, that they don't know how to drop. Especially if it is the only way they know how to communicate. Your first language will always be your first language. But first doesn't mean last. For many of us, it's unlikely that you survived knowing only one way to communicate. Why not apply that to positive behavior? To some badass magic?

Another tradition of punks (not that they invented it): skillshares and trades. As a person who has trouble with small and other sizes and shapes of motor skills and dexterity, and who has waning patience for small objects used for laborious physical tasks but waxing patience for small and elusively netted feelings, I find that my skills are too amorphous to trade or share. But that's not necessarily true. And I am trying not to let poorshame and disabledshame steer my boat. A skill of mine is "making things happen." Be them light or serious events, temporary spaces, dance parties, street protests, long distance relationships, perilous journeys, brave bearings down, bearings open, bearing witnesses. This beginning of winter, when I missed my tiny mixed race and mixed culture and certainly brilliant, open, and sweet family of origin, I celebrated Solstice, XXXmas, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Eve with gusto. With a lot to say on each day, even if I had to make it up. I used to think that magical rituals had to be just so, or they were wrong. But a lot is magic. And a ritual just has to be, for it to be solid, for it to be true, for things to come rushing in. So make sure you love the rituals you are practicing, make sure what you are inviting into the world is what you want to see in it. I am working on learning dances that can change the people of earth and allow the earth to heal. I am working on creating those dances too. I want to know what influences and moves me, what influences and moves you, what influences and moves our enemies so that we steal their fire. I want to give punks a dance that isn't ableist or culturally violent but that can stop fascism and other heinous or boring shit. I want to give punks and others in my community a ritual that we can really get behind. I'm happy to trade it for teaching me how to play piano again, or how to cook something cool, or how to prep my garage full of end of the world shit, or how to tie and untie various knots, or how to say yes when I want to, say no when I need to. I'm spending a lot of time at the drawing board. The deadline for this column always sneaks up on me, but since it's always every month, I'll be sure to

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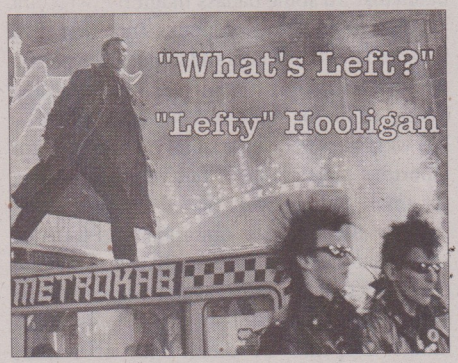
let you know what I've come up with, even if I think I don't know how to say it right.

Accessibility Fortune Teller: If you can't figure out where you can accessibly hold your party or rehearsal or meeting, you hold off, while actively communicating, until you do. Communicating about a thing on a regular basis is very very close to doing a thing, and showing that level of commitment to accessibility is a lot better than apologizing chickenshittedly after you choose the inaccessible space. If you want the accessible space badly enough, you just might create it. And you know what James Earl Jones says...



WWTYD? An *MRR* alumnus lettered this acronym on a black button over a copy of Tim Yo's old column header; a skinny menacing Yohannan brandishing a rolling pin and spatula beneath the name "Tim Yo Mama." What Would Tim Yo Do? The button was an instant success on FB, with commenters waxing nostalgic about Tim, sharing stories about the old days, recalling his meticulous if quirky attention to detail, remembering what outstanding things he said and how he belly laughed. It was a fun thread about a joke button, until I googled and posted another reference to "What Would Tim Yo Do," this one from an online pop rock radio show called "All Kindsa Girls."

"*When it comes to unyielding doctrine the* MRR *crowd give religious fundamentalists a run for their money. I have no doubt that on a daily basis young punks around the world were asking themselves 'WWTYD (What Would Tim Yo Do).' And not just regarding music—it was politics, clothes, consumer products, you name it, Tim and his people had a strong opinion about it. And God help you if your favorite band got signed or even got a distribution deal with a major label because then you could expect a sh*tstorm of hate to rain down on them in the pages of* Maximum Rocknroll. *The Clash were on a freaking major label for God's sake!* [#150, 6-16-16]

Needless to say I was harshing everybody's mellow, so it was taken down soon after I posted it.

This is a grim portrayal of Tim Yo and the *MRR* gang which likened us to a humorless fundamentalist religious sect bent on denouncing anyone or anything we deemed not punk enough. Yes, Tim and the rest of us volunteering at the magazine were certainly extremely opinionated and more than willing to use the pages of *MRR* to promote those opinions as the truth, especially when it came to what we thought was or was not punk. There was a fair amount of consensus, but there was never a party line about what constituted punk rock, major label involvement, appropriate scene activity, and what not. Tim had a great sense of humor and working with my fellow shitworkers at *MRR* HQ was nothing if not memorable. Then why are there two so widely differing descriptions of the same experience?

These are personal memories which are subjective by definition and therefore not accurate. Amassing numerous individual memories into a collective memory doesn't necessarily improve their accuracy. Collective German memory of the second World War differed markedly depending on whether the Germans in question were Christian or Jewish, and was demonstrably inaccurate even concerning fundamental facts of record within and between these two groups. Whether individual or collective, memory must first be documented, then combined with primary and secondary sources in prescribed ways to constitute evidence for the events of history. Historical evidence is more accurate because of this process, but such evidence is not fact, and certainly not truth. Consider the interminable debates still raging around the Nazi Holocaust as to who and how many were killed, by what means, where, even whether it happened at all, to determine the veracity of recorded history and its methods.

But first, when I use the word history I mean written history, not some Marxist abstraction with agency. We can argue endlessly about whether or not history demonstrates causality, pattern, or meaning; what it isn't is capital "H" History with a life of its own. People make their own history, to paraphrase Marx, but not under circumstances of their own choosing. This brings me to my second point. History is clearly distinct from the current post-fact / post-truth thinking that says simply believing in something makes it so. Simply believing that crime in the US is exploding or that all Muslims are out to kill us or that America actually won the Vietnam War or that climate change is a hoax doesn't make them facts, or true. And jumping off the top of a skyscraper while thinking you can fly doesn't negate the reality of gravity. Finally, history is not some vast conspiracy where everything and everyone is connected and some cabal runs the show from behind the scenes. According to obsessed conspiracy theorists, history is governed more by design and the will of secret elites than it is by causality, pattern, and meaning. While history records many conspiracies as determined by the evidence, history doesn't equal conspiracy.

So, what will history make of, and blame for Hillary Clinton's electoral defeat? Bernie Sanders and angry BernieBros, Jill Stein's third-party swing-state votes, the Clinton email Russian / Wikileaks hack, FBI Comey's interference, last minute GOP-instigated voter restrictions, persistent sexism and the rising alt-right's racism, the fake news smokescreen? The reasons are myriad, yet ultimately secondary. Clinton's overconfident, complacent, and strategically bumbling campaign combined with the Democratic Party's arrogant, top-down, corporate campaign management guaranteed her electoral defeat. Yes, Clinton won the popular vote by almost three million even as she lost the electoral college vote. But it's bullshit to claim "he's not my president" or "I want my country back." That's how the game of electoral politics is played in the United States, for better or worse. Instead of being sore losers, we need to transition from discussing the elections to where to go from here. Or "what is to be done," to use a tired old leftist trope, since part of what we need to do is reevaluate the Left and leftist politics.

Ah, but before we can go forward, we need to sum up where we've been, or so the mainstream Marxist Left would have it. Summing up? The Left is endlessly summing up everything from the Russian Revolution onward and coming to fractious, diametrically opposed positions. Such summing up often paralyzes people into ceaseless rumination, keeping them stuck in thinking rather than in having them act. It would be far better to take people where they're at, with whatever backgrounds and beliefs they have at that moment, and start them acting together. There's much Marxist thinking (György Lukács, Martin Glaberman, Antonio Gramsci, *et al*) that "action precedes consciousness."

As I write, mobilizations are under way for "no peaceful transition" to "stand up to Trump" and "make it ungovernable" on January 20, Inauguration Day. It would be nice if such protests could shut down Washington DC as was done in Seattle, 1999, around the WTO. I'll be sure to cover events of that day next column. Just for comparison, in May of 1971, the May Day Tribe organized three days of mass protests and civil disobedience in the capitol against the Vietnam War intended to shut down the US government. Over 35,000 protesters participated, facing off against 10,000 federal troops, 5,100 Metropolitan Police, 2,000 DC National Guard and President Nixon's internal security forces implementing

combined civil disorder emergency measures. The protesters engaged in a variety of creative tactics (such as launching tethered helium-filled balloons to ward off low-flying helicopters), but the use of mass civil disobedience was stymied when troops secured major intersections and bridges ahead of time while the police roamed through the city firing tear gas and making mass arrests. In response to the police sweeps, protesters resorted to hit-and-run tactics throughout the city, disrupting traffic and causing chaos in the streets. Politicians were harassed and federal workers, who were not given the day off, had to maneuver through police lines and protest roadblocks. In all 12,614 people were arrested, including construction workers who came out to support Nixon, making it the largest mass arrest in U.S. history. Neither Washington DC nor the US government were shut down.

A friend who participated in the 1971 May Days was tear gassed, almost run down by a motorcycle cop while walking on the sidewalk, and ultimately arrested for civil disobedience. The DC jails were filled to overflowing, so he was housed in a fenced-in emergency detention center next to the DC Stadium (now RFK Stadium) and denied food, water, and toilets while in custody. He eventually had all his charges dropped, as did all but 79 of his fellow arrestees. Thousands of protesters pursued a class action suit through the ACLU. In the end, the US Congress admitted the arrests were grossly illegal and agreed to pay financial compensation to those arrested as part of a settlement that set an historic precedent by acknowledging US citizens' constitutional right of free assembly were violated by the government. My friend received a small check for his troubles over a decade and a half later.

Unlike May 1971, when protesters had only DC residents and workers to contend with, Inauguration Day 2017 is anticipated to have two to three million people in attendance. The government's police and military powers have been greatly expanded since Nixon's day, as have urban disorder contingency measures, and the forces of law and order will be under Obama's control until Trump takes the oath of office. I have no doubt that a willingness to protest Trump can fill the streets of DC, but not if those protests are dispersed and divided. So I predict that the protests will be contained, Trump will be inaugurated without incident, and the US government will not be shut down. I don't think it's likely that the independent / ultraleft actions in Mcpherson Square Park, Workers World Party protest in Union Station, and ANSWER Coalition demonstration in Freedom Plaza will get out of control, let alone merge their separate events and run amok through the city, reprise Seattle 1999 in the nation's capitol, or declare a Columbia Commune. If protests intended to go beyond run-of-the-mill '60s mass marches and demonstrations into mass nonviolent disruption couldn't break the government in 1971, it's unlikely that protest-as-usual and limited, targeted civil disobedience or even some streetfighting can do so now.

We'll talk about how to go beyond ineffective protest into effective direct action, but I'll first evaluate the present-day American Left in the next column or two.

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i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

I wouldn't call myself a fan of Paul Simon's music, necessarily. I mean I don't need to talk shit. It's just not my thing. But I've been reading about songwriting; probably it's gross to talk about bathroom libraries but since you're probably reading this in a bathroom—Bathrooms: The Home Of *Maximum Rocknroll*—maybe it's okay to tell you that I've got this eight-hundred page book of interviews with songwriters on a shelf in my bathroom, on top of some old *MRRs*, frequently under a couple of newer ones, and I've been working my way through it. It's not that good. I wanted it to be a lot of people smarter than me talking about structure and theory at a level just slightly above what I understand, which I could then apply to my daily blastbeat praxis, but instead it's kind of a lot of Bob Dylan saying nothing for fifteen pages at a time.

I'm trying not to talk shit but Bob Dylan's music is emphatically not my shit and neither, I guess, is what he has to say about it. But I keep reading this book and it's not about songwriting in the way that I want it to be but Paul Simon did say something in it that kinda fucked me up. He was talking about writers' block and he said something like, "I don't believe in writer's block. I think that what people mean when they say 'I have writer's block' is 'I have something I really need to say but I don't want to say it but I can't think of anything better."

Dude. I have been having that.

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I keep wanting to have something smart to say about our new American president and the wild shit that he and his administration have already been pulling, because as of this writing it's weeks 'til he's even sworn in and the audacity of the narcissism and moral relativity and stuff are all, already, pretty impressive. But I've been struggling to think of what to say about it. I mean, on one level, it's pretty scary—a lot of people are talking about how much this looks like the rise of authoritarianism, or something like fascism. But on another, there might not technically be concentration camps around, but we could talk (for example) about America's refugee detention centers that already exist, which were already in place long before running for the presidency was even a glimmer in our president elect's horrible scrotum. We already know that this world is a dystopia whose praxis defines bad politics. What is "worse" even going to look like?

I mean I guess we'll find out.

After the election I was in this fog for a month—waking up depressed, struggling to engage with other people, not making podcasts or playing music, smoking a lot of weed and, like, watching *The Simpsons* all day. (*The Simpsons*: Not As Progressive As You Remembered.) I'd been in LA for six months and I spent a pretty disconnected weekend in the Bay with my lover who I never really get to see, drove across the country in four days, and then I was home and hanging out with my girlfriend and our dog in this house we put a down payment on and shit was awesome, in all these ways, but I couldn't stop opening Twitter on my phone and feeling all heartsick and defeated by the prophecies of all our literal deaths that kept coming up.

I was like: am I this upset about the election? That doesn't feel right. But what the fuck else might be going on?

What indeed, Paul Simon.

I went to breakfast with Alex one morning at a little diner we go to. There had been a snowstorm the night before and it started snowing again on our way there, pretty heavily, and I'll level with you Maximum. I am a fucking baby about driving in the snow. Maybe that brought out my anxiety even more than usual. I don't know. But I ended up surprising myself, talking about being in LA for six months, and that I might end up there six months from now, for twice as long this time. And that Alex was talking about coming with me. And sort of blurting out that I felt guilty about it.

This is what I realized: I wasn't upset about American politics. I'd been wracked with fucking guilt because I felt like I was derailing my girlfriend's life by disappearing for so long

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and then asking Alex to derail her life to come next time, if there's a next time. I mean, in the real world you get to ask this and the other person gets to come up with an answer; in my head, though, I'd defaulted to guilt and shame and feeling like I don't get to ask for things. Do you do this? This is where I lived for the first twenty or twenty-five years and when I'm not careful I just end up back there. I was just hating myself! Guilt And Shame: The Default Setting. I had started feeling guilty months ago, hadn't processed it, got all blocked up with it, and it was fucking me up.

This mental fog hadn't rolled in on election night—it had started before I even left for LA, and then when I was in LA I spent all my time either working or smoking weed or sleeping badly and not processing anything. Then the election happened and the overall anxiety level went up but the anxiety boats, y'know, they just rose with the fucking tide.

It doesn't really matter why. I mean it's because as a trans kid who didn't want to be a trans kid I started reflexively denying myself personhood pretty young. Maybe the specifics are different for you? But this is what I want to talk about: there's a lot of us who are harder on ourselves than we are on anybody else. Maybe this is you? It's pretty fuckin' common. And while we're over here hating ourselves, calling each other out, drowning in shame and feeling isolated from each other? The jerks are shameless, not calling each other out, celebrating cruelty, passing laws which they hope will make us cease to exist because they can't kill us all directly so maybe they can kill us indirectly. With like. Legislation.

Why are we the ones with all the shame and self-hate? They're the assholes, man.

I mean...maybe you don't have the shame and self-hate. I don't know you. I hope you don't. But the jerks? They definitely don't. Can you imagine Donald Trump sitting around smoking weed and watching *The Simpsons*, idly fantasizing about doing a zine cataloguing every time there's a joke making fun of trans women over the course of all six thousand episodes because he feels guilty about having a negative impact on someone else's life?

I don't know what to do about it. I mean you know this story. The most powerful tools our aspiration toward humanity gives us—wanting to be good, wanting at least to be better than we are, questioning our own motives and actions for selfishness or cruelty, giving a fuck about shit—these are exactly the things that keep us from focusing on a path forward and coalitioning to make it happen. You know? The impulse to tear each other down (for example, for being problematic) comes from the same place, as far as I can tell, as the impulse to look out for each other. Sometimes we're reproducing jerk stuff when we call each other out, but somewhere in there too is the intention to call each other out because we are trying to hold each other, and ourselves, to a pretty high standard. Meanwhile these jerks, they straight up lie about shit, get called on it, and don't give a fuck.

What we want is to live with complexity, to make it work, which is a complicated process. (The jerks' plan is relatively simple and roughly boils down to fourteen words that you can google, if you don't know 'em, because I don't want to type them out.) I mean I am simplifying as hell but in a sense we're like "how can we make complexity work" and they're like "how can we eliminate complexity." To some extent, they're doing it. They're always been doing it. They've been getting away with the elimination of the things that confuse and scare them on a relatively local, organic level for a long time, right? As the Movement for Black Lives has been making clear for a few years now.

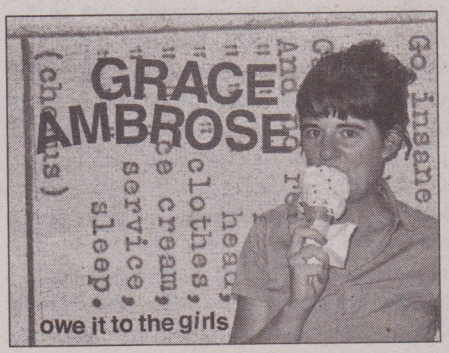
The jerks—Jerks: the Death Cult of the Straight White Cis Man—have given up on the possibility of connecting with other people across difference. Think about how pessimistic that perspective is: translate "it won't work" into Latin, burn it into a plank, and nail it about the door. Meanwhile we're over here trying to live in a world that sucks and to make it suck less by understanding each other, wanting to be challenged, really working to be better than we were raised to be. For all the ways we fail—"losing every day, but we'll never be defeated," am I right?—it's like the most optimistic thing I can think of. But it's hard. It's necessarily uncertain work and it would be impossible to do it without fucking up, being accountable, and moving forward humbled.

Except that starting a band and hollering about this stuff is relatively uncomplicated. I keep coming back to this idea—because it's been my experience—that being in a band and playing songs about real shit can be this game changer in terms of remembering that you're powerful. That this long shot bonkers optimism is something you can feel in your body, in your hands and in your throat and your chest, sucking these huge breaths into your lungs and then feeling yourself expel them with the energy and the words and the conviction that we don't, I don't, really ever let myself feel. You know? This is one of the reasons that you don't have to be good at an instrument, you just have to mean whatever it is that you're putting into the world.

Of course there are jerks making music (play a metal show sometime!) and of course there are other important things to do besides playing in bands. But when I think specifically about *MRR*-level DIY culture and the people I know and love who are involved in it, sometimes it feels like a Room of Requirement (*Harry Potter*: A Good Story About Resisting Fascism Except Then He Grows Up And Becomes A Cop) where we can go to feel in our bodies that we are fucking trying. Even the grimmest fucking blackened grind / crust / screamo stuff, which sploshes its galoshes around in war and murder and environmental catastrophe all day, is usually doing it to acknowledge that that stuff blows. You know? For the most part I still think that basement shows and affinity groups and local organizing are some of the most optimistic and hopeful things we've got.

I'm thinking about optimism a lot right now. I'm figuring out how to process a lot of this guilt and shame because they're seem helpful but they're not. They just keep you blocked up and shut down, doing the jerks' work for them. Especially in the winter, when everything is dead, there's only a couple hours of sun in the day, and life feels impossible, it's easy to wallow and hate myself. Let's support each other through this shit.

Meanwhile, I'm reading up on songwriting.



So Donald Trump is president. I wrote a bit about what's happened so far but by the time you get this, we'll be so much further gone that printing it seems futile.

It's a strange time to watch people around me (like my parents!) undergo their political radicalization. How do we meet people at different points in their political lives with empathy and understanding while also demanding that they be better, think harder, and put in the hard and rigorous work that's required in order to catch up with the rest of us, and catch up quickly? It feels like for the first time in my lifetime progressive and radical thought has the opportunity to mobilize in this country on a grand scale. I went to the airport yesterday and it didn't feel like a peaceful cop-sponsored parade, like the Women's March from a few days earlier had. It felt angry, it felt disruptive, *and* it was a lot of the same people from earlier in the week.

Shit's always been bad, yeah, but this is a new kind of nightmare. I'm not sure where to tell you to throw your time and money. Here's one place to start: disruptj20.org/legal-fund

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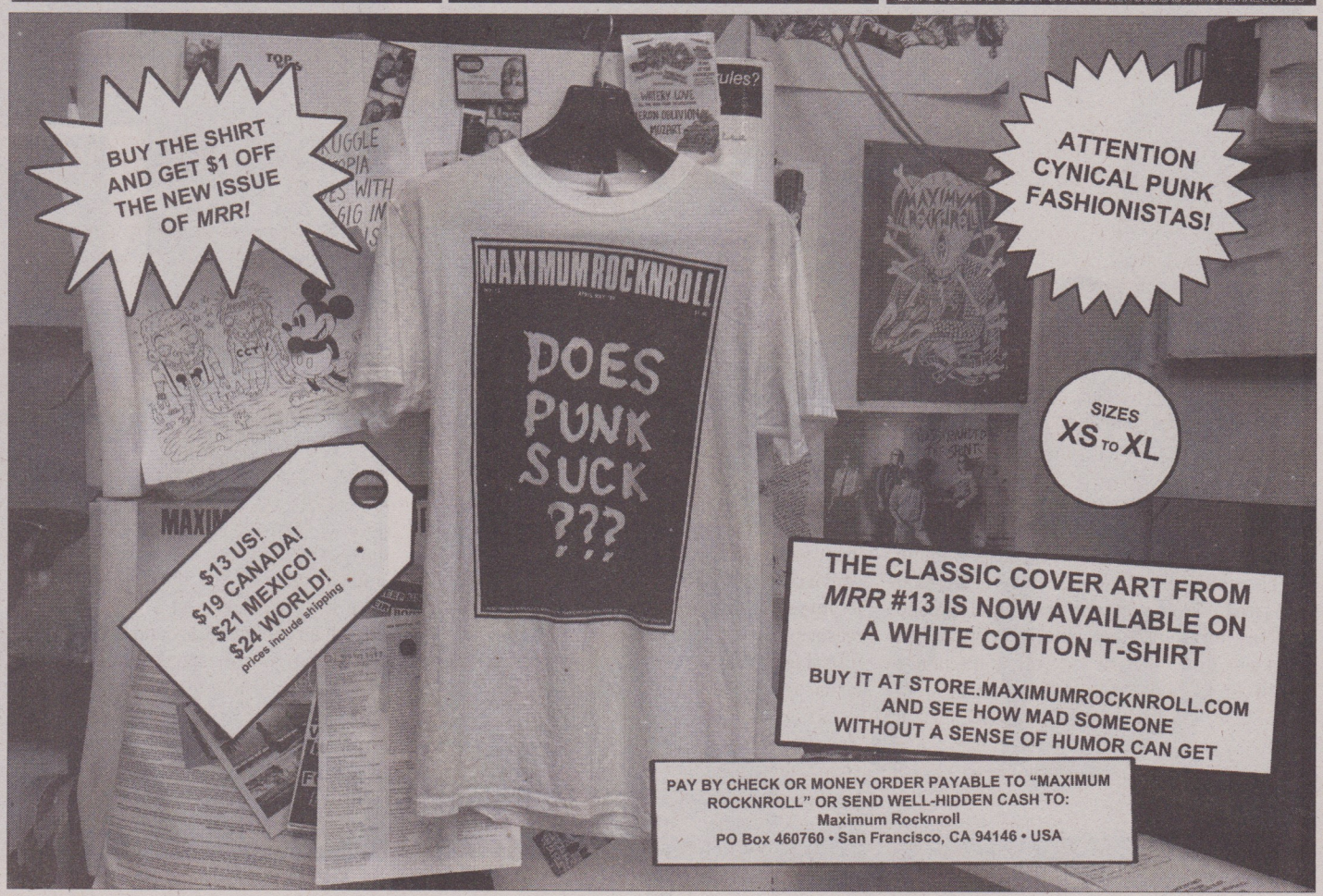


ARCHIVE PROJECT UPDATE

It's been half a year since the end of the Indiegogo fundraiser for the MRR Archive. Since June, we've been busy inventorying, cleaning, rehousing, green taping, and cataloging all 49,955 records we own. We've been digitizing back issues, scanning special covers made by Tim Yo, conducting dozens of research requests for punks and scholars, and tracking down records we're missing from the collection. Hundreds of shitworkers from all over the world have helped us out, some for just an hour once and some for 5 hours each week.

Each month, we get in 80-120 records for review and the constant growth of the collection was overwhelming our shelf capacity. With the money earned in the fundraiser, we were able to buy four new shelves to accommodate thousands more LPs. We bought tens of thousands of poly bags and put them on every single LP. We've purchased new shelf liners, baskets for supplies, a library kick stool for hard-to-reach top shelves, and custom wood alphabet dividers.

These funds have also made it possible for us to buy archival boxes for our paper collections. Our full run of magazine back issues is now properly stored in acid-free containers, and our collection of letters, postcards, and newspaper clippings will soon be rehoused in acid-free folders and boxes. Much of the paper ephemera we have is truly one-of-a-kind, consisting of hand drawn art and flyers, and its long-term survival is crucial. Digitizing and rehousing these materials is a smart move to increase access and decrease handling of fragile papers.

We will be launching the MRR Archive website in Summer 2017 The first phase of the launch will have the fully digitized MRR back issue archive, with over 400 issues dating back to 1982! Shortly thereafter, we'll be launching a searchable database of our record collection, with reviews for every record we've ever reviewed.

Want to help out? We need Bay Area shitworkers to help out with inventory and rehousing, and remote shitworkers can contribute data entry. We especially need some database and technology help! Do you have any experience with CollectiveAccess? Can you fix a Mac? Please get in touch with us at archive@maximumrocknroll.com.

2016 RELEASE STATISTICS

GENERAL

Number of records: 1082
Number of US releases: 656
Number of international releases: 426
Number of countries represented: 40
Non-US country with the most releases: England

FORMATS

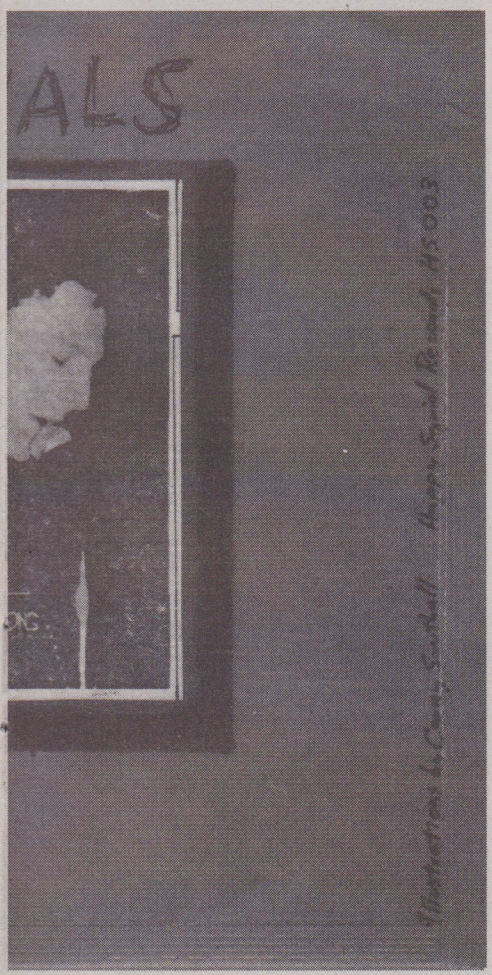
Number of 7"s: 509
Number of 10"s: 22
Number of 12" EPs: 45
Number of LPs: 506
Number of comps: 25
Number of splits: 68
Number of flexis: 14
Number of self-released records: 44

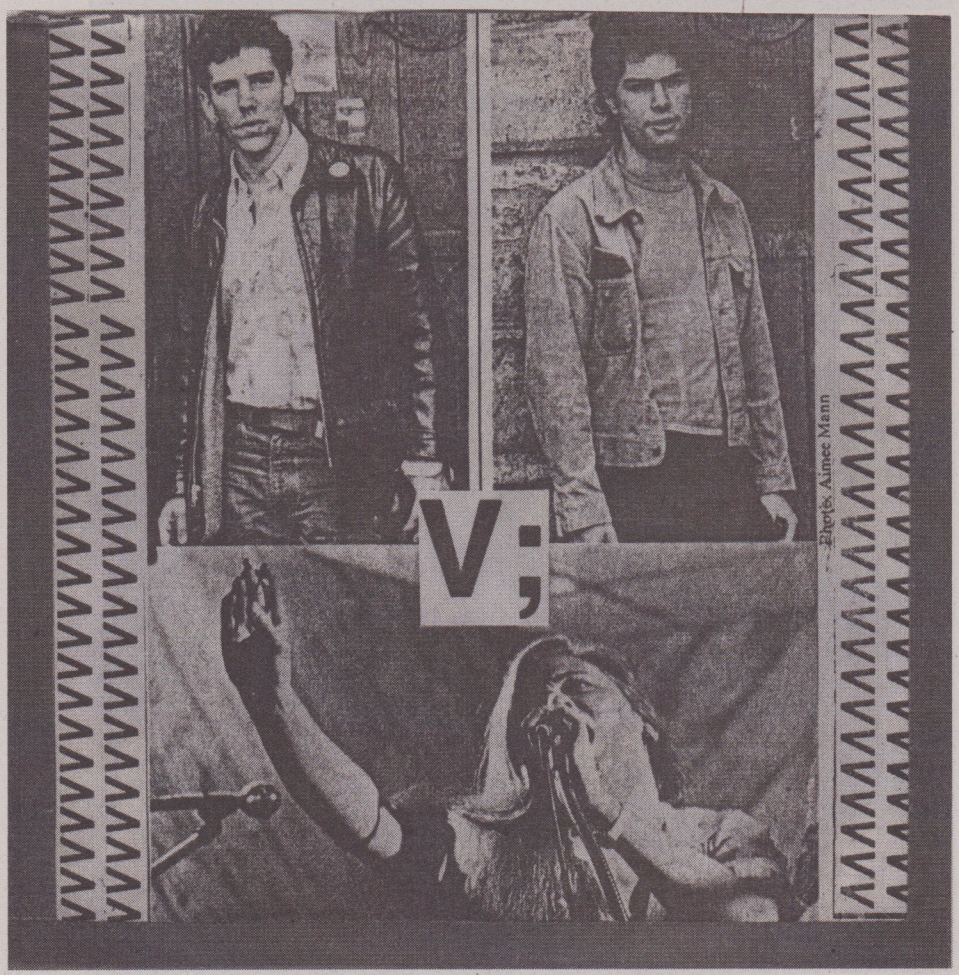
REVIEWS/REVIEWERS

Reviewer with the most reviews: Robert Collins (67)
Label with most releases: Beer City (16), Deranged (19), La Vida Es Un Mus (16)
Band with most releases: The Varukers (7), The Fall (6), MDC (5), The Faction (5)
Issue with the most records: 404 (129)
Issue with the fewest records: 395 (53)

AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2017 THE MRR COLLECTION CONTAINS 49,969 RECORDS

CAN YOU NAME ALL THE RECORDS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES? A PRIZE THE FIRST PERSON TO IDENTIFY THEM ALL CORRECTLY!





BLACK FLAG
BLACK FLAG
JEALOUS AGAIN

WALKING IN THE SAND
FADING PART
TIL THE MORNING LIGHT
BURNING & SPYING
CAN'T STOP THE WORLD
YEAH YEAH YEAH
LUST FOR LOVE
COOL JERK
AUTOMATIC
SKID MARKS ON MY HEART
GO-GO'S
WE GOT THE BEAT
HOW MUCH MORE
LETS HAVE A PARTY TONIGHT
OUR LIPS ARE SEALED
THIS TOWN
LONDON BOY

FLIP

CREATURES OF SHIT...ADDRE YOUR CREATOR...E.G. MY FUCKIN' ARSEHOLE...
BEAT V.A.T. ..... STEAL SOME-THING
POLITICIANS JUST TALK A LOAD OF LYING FUCKING SHIT!
ORGONIZE...PART
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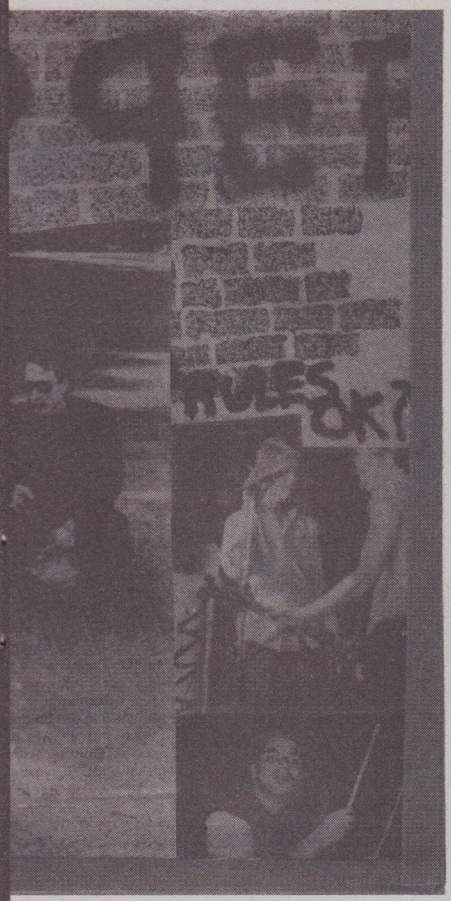
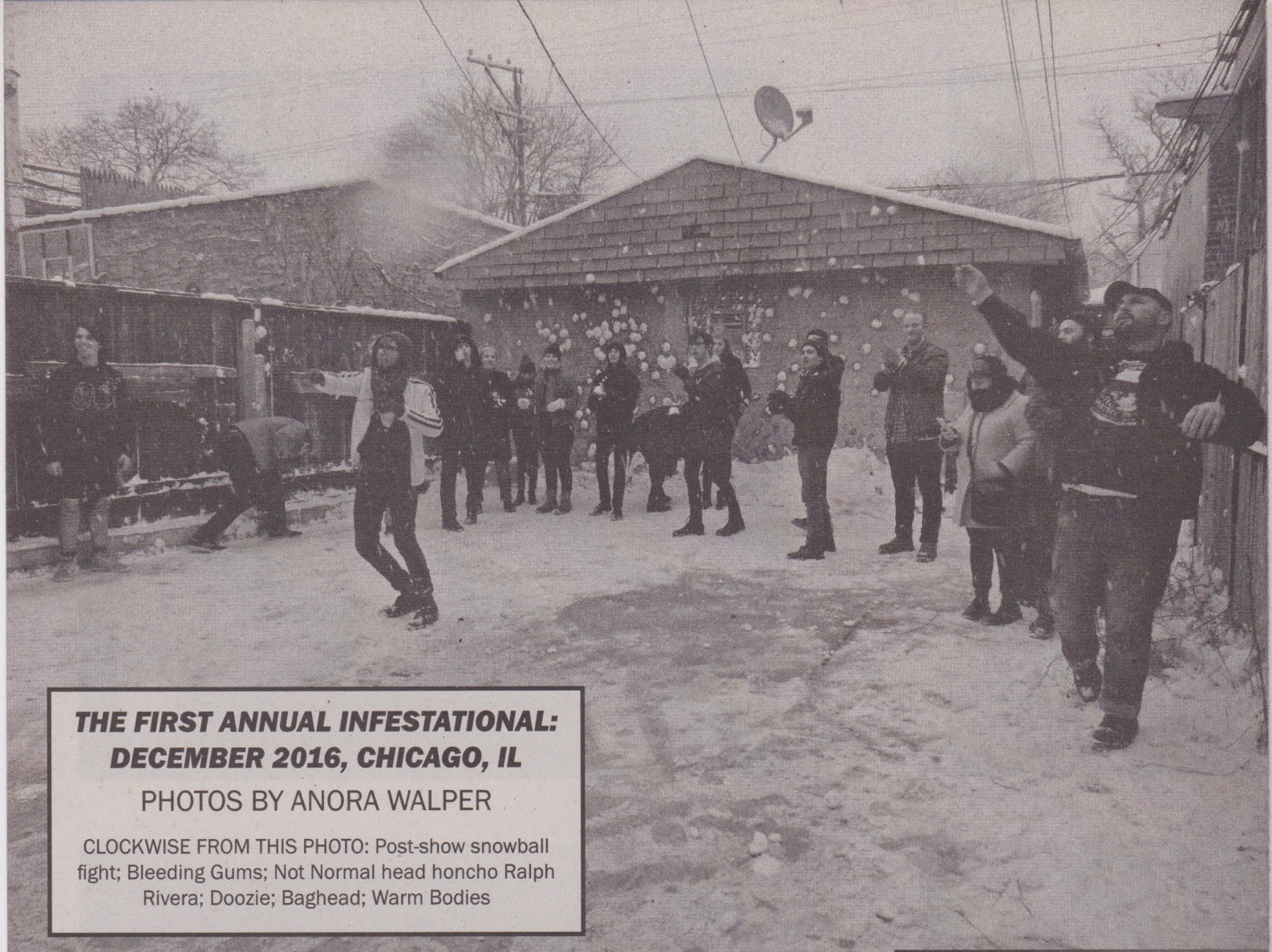

RULES OK?

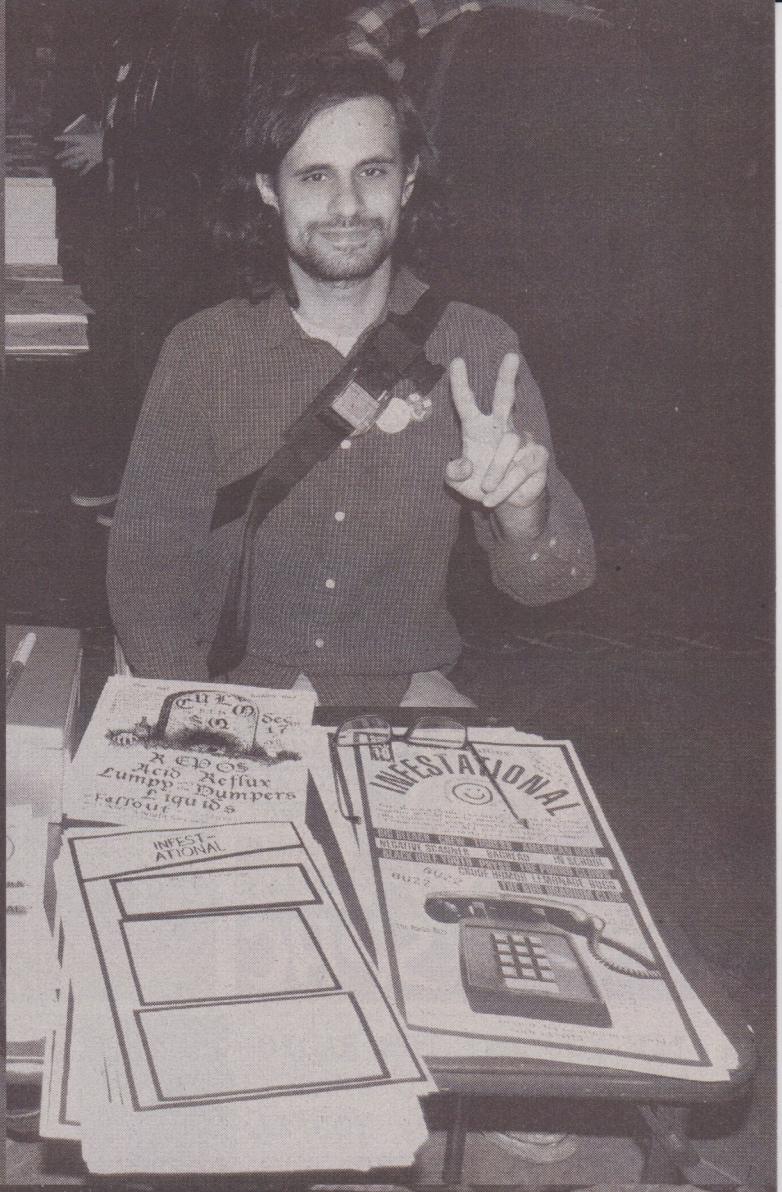
The Desperate Bicycles



THE FIRST ANNUAL INFESTATIONAL: DECEMBER 2016, CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOS BY ANORA WALPER

CLOCKWISE FROM THIS PHOTO: Post-show snowball fight; Bleeding Gums; Not Normal head honcho Ralph Rivera; Doozie; Baghead; Warm Bodies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WW07 BRUTE HEART - *Wildfire* 7"
WW08 THE ANDROIDS OF MU - *Blood Robots* LP
WW10 POISON GIRLS - *Hex* 12" 45RPM EP
WW11 POISON GIRLS - *Chappaquiddick Bridge* LP+1 Sided 7"
WW12 CHOCOLAT BILLY - *Mon Père Est Ma Mère* LP
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S-21

IS CELLA - VOX
BRIAN - GUITAR
TIFF - GUITAR
NNEKA - BASS
CASSIDY - DRUMS

We talked to the Philly hardcore outfit about life under Trump, the failures and successes of punk as a space of resistance, and their future plans. Their new record, Year Zero, is out now. Order it from World Gone Mad or Slugsalt Records, or catch them on tour in a city near you.

Interview by Natalie Harris. Photos provided by Fun Punks on Film, Kate Sweeney, Marit Stafstrom, Jaime Salazar, and Ben Trogdon.
Art by Cassidy McGinley.

MRR: Tell me a little bit about how the band came together from its inception up until now.
Brian: Cella approached me about starting a band, and I guess she was looking to do something heavier and hardcore. I hadn't written songs since I was in Anti-Zen, so I was interested in writing songs for a band. So, I said, "Yeah, that'd be great."
Cella: I was previously in a band with Tiff called Chondria, and I saw Cassidy play drums in Low Charge and really liked seeing her play and wanted her to be in the band. And Brian really wanted to be in a band again with Brad [Napier].

MRR: And Brad was the first bass player?
Nneka: Yeah. Brad had to move to Boston for work, and I had been talking to Tiff about playing music again. I had seen S-21 a couple of times and I was in love with the band and had loved Chondria, so when Tiff asked me if I wanted to play bass, I was like, "Fuck yeah."
Cella: I think with S-21, I definitely wanted to play with other women and POCs and I think that was one of my main motivations for the band, too, just being able to play in a band with people who share similar experiences as me.
Tiff: But, we were all also friends prior.
Nneka: When I joined the band, I didn't even think like, "Oh, this is gonna be great if I'm with other women." I mean, I believe that very strongly now, but it was more like, "Oh, I'm gonna finally be in something that's not a cover band with Tiff, cool." But now, that is a very strong connecting point for me with this band.
Tiff: Yeah, I had seen Nneka play bass in New Brunswick for many years, and she always killed it, so it was natural.
Cassidy: Yeah, I had also never really played in a band with other women, which I thought was insane, but I didn't realize until joining, and then I was like, "Hell yeah"... totally messed up, haha.

MRR: What are some of the influences and inspirations for the band musically and otherwise?
Brian: I guess if we were talking purely musically, I draw a lot of influence from the more metallic punk from Japan, mixed with maybe some of the darker, heavier US hardcore bands from the '80s, like YDI—shoutout to Chuck Meehan.

MRR: We all love Chuck.
Cassidy: I remember Brian was like, "It's gonna be like Cro-Mags meets Zouo" and I don't think it sounds like that, but it's a good reference point.
TIff: I guess there's always like, your inspirations as a jumping off point and then your band sounds like something else, which I think is cooler.
Cassidy: Usually it turns out better that way.
Cella: Yeah I definitely feel like we created our own thing, 'cause I know originally Brian and I were like, "It'd be cool to have SSD style vocals" and it's definitely nothing like that.
Tiff: Cella, do you have any vocal inspirations?
Cella: Well, I think one of the inspirations I've had was definitely listening to Cambodian rock from the '60s and '70s. The opening song of our demo, "Mass Grave," plays a sample from a song called "Have You Seen My Love?" by the singer Ros Sereysothea. I definitely listened to her songs when I was a kid. My dad used to play them and it never dawned on me 'til much later how revolutionary it was. It really is a testament to how resilient music is, especially during trying times...
Tiff: Yeah, all of the Cambodian rock compilations that are out there are really amazing.
Cella: I definitely listened to the compilations a lot when I was writing the lyrics, especially for the demo.
Tiff: We should note that Brian is the songwriter of the band...
Cassidy: The riffmaster.

MRR: Tell me a little bit about the name S-21.
Cella: So, the name S-21. It was a prison that the Khmer Rouge used to torture and interrogate Cambodians back in the '70s. It's particularly significant to me as a child of a Cambodian refugee. I actually went to S-21 back in 2004 and it was the first time that I came face-to-face with the atrocities of genocide. My family never really talked about the war or the family members that we lost or anything about the genocide at all. Everything was pretty much unspoken. So, while I kind of knew about what happened, so much of my family history is lost or unknown. Even today, I have a million questions that are left unanswered. I guess more recently, I've started to look into the implications of war and genocide that aren't so blatant, such as intergenerational trauma and child abuse. It's been a personal journey for me trying to understand all of these things and how they play into my own life. So, the name S-21 is basically a reminder that this trauma is real and still very much alive, even though most of the world has forgotten about everything that's happened.
Brian: I mean, it's something that I don't even think I learned in history classes throughout my life.
Cella: Right. I mean, another thing is that we kind of all learned about the Vietnam War, but I didn't realize until much later that the US definitely had a hand in the rise of the Khmer Rouge due to their illegal bombing campaign in Cambodia.

MRR: Yeah, that's not something I knew.
Tiff: Yeah, I feel like sometimes after we play a show, we'll get someone who will come up to us and be like, "So, S-21...Is that named after the Cambodian prison camp?" as if maybe we don't already know, or like we just chose it because it's a war reference or abstract, or as if it doesn't have any real connection to the band, but...

MRR: I don't want to make any judgments about the identities of these people, but I have a feeling that they're probably white dudes...That's frustrating.
Cella: It is pretty frustrating. Especially since they obviously don't know my family history and identity as a Cambodian-American.
Tiff: Yeah and when we first put out our demo, there was a guy who...
Cella: Oh yeah, on the *MRR* Facebook page when our demo was posted, like, "Stupid Americans, naming their band after a Cambodian concentration camp" or something.
Cassidy: I feel like they even said like, "Stupid white boys" or something
Tiff: And the guy who said that ended up being some white guy who was wearing a rice paddy hat in his profile picture. You know, it's just funny...I mean it's not funny.

MRR: Yeah, that's just really horrible. And frustrating that someone like that feels like they can question you in person or take up space in that conversation at all. S-21 is a pretty openly political band. Can you talk about some of the issues you all represent in the music with the lyrics, the band's art, etc. You talked a little bit about how the name is a reminder of the traumatic effects of war, and it speaks to a lot of your own personal experience with that, like the intergenerational trauma. Is there anything else you want to say about what the band discusses in its lyrics?
Cella: I guess as a band that has queer women of color, I think everything that we do, see and touch is political, whether we try to be or not. I guess that's why our lyrics do cover things like police brutality, racial injustices within the criminal justice system, being hyper-sexualized and objectified as an Asian woman, and being a survivor of abuse. All of these things are part of either my personal life or the lives of people and communities I care about.
Nneka: Yeah, I don't write the music, but when I hear song titles like "Power Abuse" or "Brass Gavel"—these are terms that strike a chord with people in different ways based on what your experiences are. But for me, those experiences are usually issues of injustice, or feeling like you've been faulted and that you've been wronged systematically throughout your life for reasons that you can't change. Like I can't change the color of my skin or how I identify as a person or a human being. But hearing those words and hearing those songs...like before I was in the band, they spoke to my experiences, and they still do. And I think that's why I feel so strongly about the music. Moreso than any other band that I've ever been in.
Tiff: I mean, yeah, all of these topics are very relatable to my personal life as an Asian-American woman and as a daughter of Taiwanese immigrants. I feel like Cella and Nneka both summed it up pretty well. I guess I would just say that I feel like Cella's lyrics are very relevant and represent a voice that maybe hasn't been very prominent in punk and hardcore. And I'm happy to be standing behind that and putting that out there.

MRR: The past month has been trying and tragic for a lot of us. If you feel comfortable, can you talk about your feelings about the outcome of the US Presidential election and the aftermath of that event? What has that experience been like for all of you?
Nneka: One big long "FUUUUUUUCK." Just every day, waking up and feeling horrible. Yeah, it's really painful to think that we've been in a place...I mean we've always been in this place. Nothing has ever really changed as far as racism and sexism in this country. The only thing that's changed is the way things are represented. But, it's always been there in the form of slavery, in the form of chain gangs, in the form of the facilitation of black bodies into prison. It's always been there and it will always be there unless you dismantle entire systems—capitalism, patriarchy, racism, white supremacy... all of these things. I think to see all of those systems pretty much uplifted to such a degree, where we now have a person who makes no qualms of expressing all of these things...He doesn't hide who he is, you know. It's tough to wake up every morning and to realize that I live in a world where anti-blackness is the norm...that being a person of color, being a person with disabilities, being a woman, being queer, being trans—like, that is a world where I am marked for death. That has been really trying and it's made me question a lot of things about living and surviving and wanting to stay in this country or be here.

One thing that I always go back to is that to exist and to survive and to be here is resistance. And I always say this—my existence is resistance to these systems and I will continue to exist and I will continue to be here because it's my right as a person, and I will not give that up. I am happy that there have been conversations about how to change and address these things. I think a lot more needs to be done though. I think there needs to be collective political action and I don't think we're seeing that right now because the left is so highly stratified, which fucking blows my mind. I don't know what it's gonna take. Like how many black and brown bodies do you need to see bleeding in the streets?

MRR: This is going back to one comment you made, but you mentioned thinking about leaving the country...
Nneka: I grew up here. I was born here and I lived in Nigeria for three years, from like four to seven years old. But my mom's back home, and she's back home for fucked up reasons, which I don't really want to get into, but I guess I kind of have to. I think about the sacrifices that my mom made for me and my brother to be here as an undocumented person. Part of the reason why the election hurt so much was to think about the sacrifices she made in terms of her life, her happiness, her security, her safety...for us to be here, and for us to have that American dream. And to see all of that just gone, and to see that we've come here, it kind of just made me feel like, "Well, fuck it." Like maybe I should just go back home and just be with my mom and contribute to my country—contribute to Nigeria in a way that can better the health system or the economy there. There's

been this idea of brain drain of people from African countries leaving and coming to Europe, the US, and Canada. We pour all of our blood, our sweat, our tears into these countries, and we get nothing in return. We get citizenship, but what is the cost of that citizenship? If it's that we get to this point where we have to fear for our lives every day, then what is the point, you know? What have we gained in comparison to our losses? So I think I've been thinking a lot about, for lack of a better term, "reverse brain drain" and going back home. Yeah, you have to deal with corruption and you have to deal with a whole other beast, but I know I'm contributing to a country that loves its people. And I say that in terms of the community and the community-based system. I'm not gonna make any excuses—Nigeria isn't perfect either. But, I can go and be with my mom and feel like at least I'm with her, and that her sacrifice wasn't to a fault.

MRR: Thank you for elaborating. It's all really overwhelming.
Cella: I think one of the things that I saw in the aftermath that really bugged me was that a few people mentioned that punk was going to be "good again" with Trump as president. And I'm just wondering what kind of punk music they've been listening to all of these years, 'cause it's not like women, queers, and people of color haven't been talking about these issues since forever. I do hope that in light of the Trump presidency, it will mean more fighting, organizing, and resisting against systems of oppression.
Cassidy: Yeah, definitely. I think it's terrible, but if anything, it should be a catalyst for taking things into our own hands, and in our smaller scene, just not putting up with anything and really being an ally to the people who really need it. It is just highlighting things that have existed. They're not new, it's not like he brought it in, but he's further justifying terrible things. So I hope if anything, it's just strengthening things at the bottom and we can just work up.
Tiff: I think I have too many things to say about this topic. I think many of us went to bed knowing what the outcome was going to be. And at that point it was just kind of like, "Well, what it is is what it's going to be, so..." Waking up the next day was something else. I guess I haven't really been able to pinpoint it in words, like what waking up to the realization of Trump being elected as president meant for myself, my home, and this country, and everyone that I know. It definitely felt kind of like receiving a death sentence. Nneka and I kind of talked about this, and Cella and I talked about this, but receiving a death sentence where you don't necessarily know when the date will be, or how bad it will get, and what will happen exactly. But there's this kind of a dark cloud looming over us. It took a really long time to come out of that shock, and I think some of us haven't even fully come out of it yet.

I had to go straight to work, and it was going into work to two of my coworkers who are trans people, and we all just started crying and holding each other. It felt really hard to look at strangers. I work at a food service job where I have to face crowds of people coming up to me, and it just felt so difficult to even look them in the eye. I think a lot of people, especially people of color or women or anyone really, just walked around feeling like, "Do you think that I deserve a lesser life than you do?" And that's hard because it can feel really personal with family members, or people you know, or maybe people who you like, but maybe you always decided to put politics aside and not address it. Now it feels almost impossible to not think about it and not address it. At first it felt like, oh my god, they're taking our lives away today—it's gone. But you know, we're all still here right now, and I think it is important for us to keep existing, and like everyone is saying, resisting. Existing as a form of resistance, because they haven't taken it all away.
Nneka: No.

MRR: This is kind of a tangent, but Tiff and I work in the same place, and the night after, I saw you and you told me a story about a customer coming up to you. He's an older white guy, we don't know much about him...
Tiff: Oh yeah, he's a regular at the coffee shop and I don't know anything about him, but he's always been very friendly. That morning definitely felt like, "I don't know how anyone feels about anything right now." And it feels scary to feel like I can't trust people around me. The look of death was on my face, I couldn't function, and he just said, "I am so sorry. I can't believe this is happening. But you know, they can take some things away from us, but they can't take everything." And that meant a lot to me. I think that's important to express, especially for people who might not be on the agenda list of marginalized groups that the incoming administration wants to oppress. If you're not immediately on that list, it's important for you to talk to the people around you and express how you feel.

MRR: It's kind of a heavy question, but it's an important one, an important discussion.
Tiff: I think it's a scary time in the US, but also, the impact that the US has on the world is vast and so deep. I think the whole world is scared right now.

MRR: How do you all feel about punk being a political space? How does it do this successfully, how does it fall short, and why?
Nneka: For me, punk has been really interesting, because it's been something I experience in a number of conflicting ways. It's been a way for me to express myself. Not even just punk, but really music in general, was a way for me to express my feelings and thoughts and a lot of issues that I felt both internally and externally. Those were things that I never really talked to my family about and I still don't talk to my family about them. Besides my brother, my mom doesn't know I play

music, or that I'm in bands or anything like that. So being able to have the community that I've found within punk has made me feel validated in a lot of ways in terms of having a space to talk about my feelings and feel people accept that or react to it and take it in. The conflicting part is having this space to express myself and my feelings, oftentimes to complete strangers, but not being able to convey those same expressions to the people I love the most.

The other issue I've experienced as a black woman in punk is representation. Like I remember going to shows as a kid and looking into the crowd and being able to count on one hand the number of black or brown people that I saw in the crowd and sometimes being the only black woman at a show. I think that in some ways...well, I don't want to say that punk itself has come a long way, but I think the communities that facilitate these spaces have pushed for more inclusiveness and have changed how I see and experience punk today. I think bringing people that aren't just white cis dudes into show spaces or into these conversations or this scene have helped it feel more inclusive. Philadelphia has an extensive history of diversity and organizing and seeing the scene here makes me happy. I see a scene that lifts up the voices of trans, queer, POCs in punk. To know that this space exists for other people and that hopefully they feel safe and that they can talk or just address those things, I think that's great. But, I think that like anything else punk and our communities have a long way to go, and there's still so much work to do, in the way that we react to things and in the way that we address issues of exclusivity and creating more inclusive and safer spaces for people. I think there's always more work to do. I never want to get to the point where I think that our job is done, 'cause it never will be.

Brian: Yeah, I guess in punk, what I worry about now is that people think that they see a few bands with women in it, and people of color, so they're like, "Oh, everything is good now." When in actuality, it's not good for everybody and there's so much more that needs to be done. I feel like people get stagnant or are like, "Oh well, you know, there's so many women in the scene now, or so many people of color in the scene now," but it's not true. It's definitely dominated by white males, cis people. But they just point out these small things, and like maybe even tokenize and are like "Oh, there you go, you have your bands and book your own show, or book your own fest" and in actuality, there needs to be more inclusion, and that's still a huge problem.

Nneka: You talked about tokenizing, and I think people see bands that have members that don't identify as white cis punks, like dudes, and they see it as like a "Oh, well if you're getting any measure of success, it's because of these things." It's not because your music resonates with a large group of people that maybe haven't had that voice before or that you're really good at what you do. It's that your bodies and your identities are so different that that's the only thing that's making you stick out.

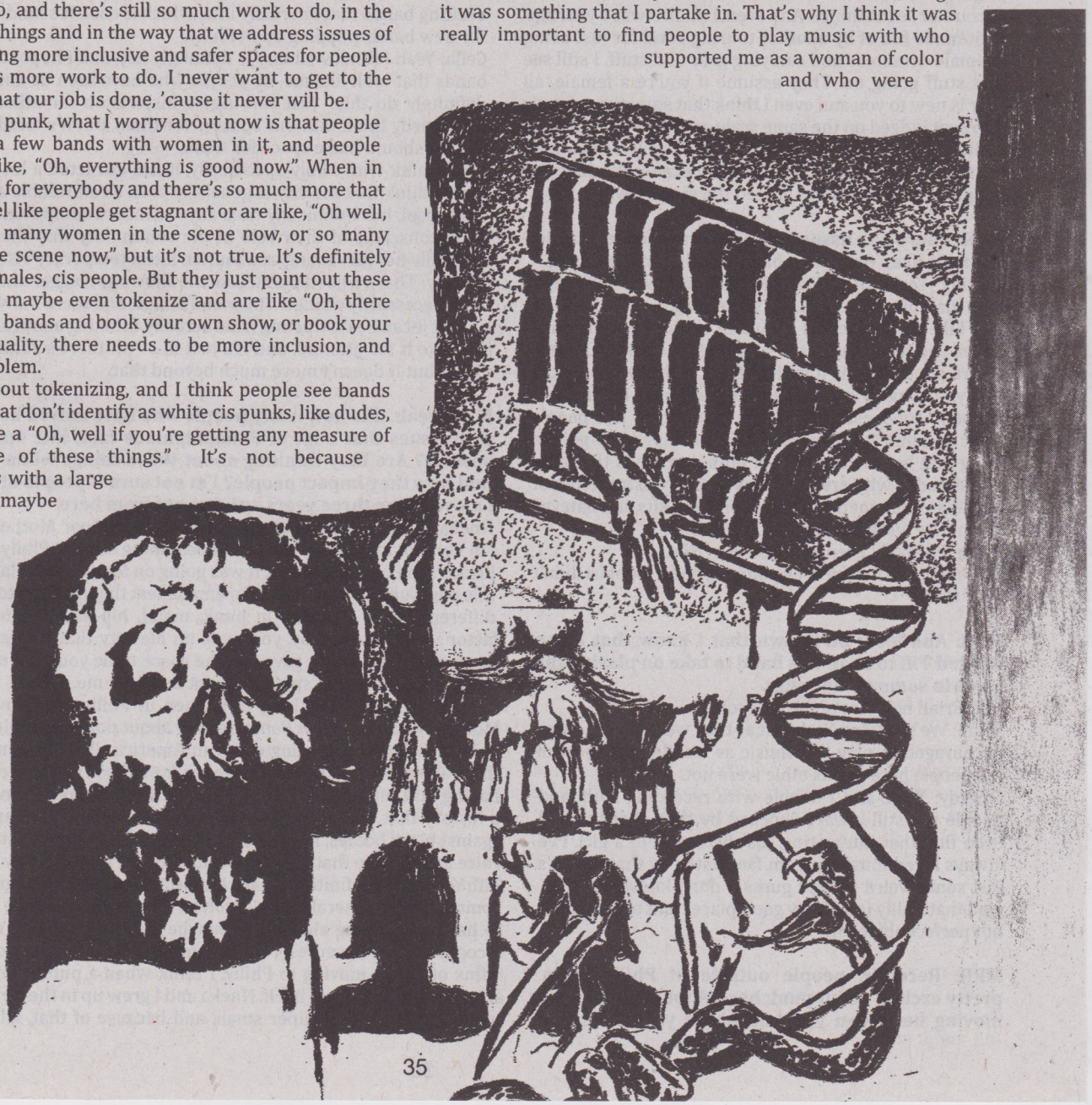
Brian: Yeah, or that those people think they work harder to get there, or have to work harder.

Nneka: The point is, these voices are here, and they're prominent, and they're resonating with so many people because so many people have these experiences.

Tiff: Yeah, I guess with punk as a political space, the way we see it is that inherently, no matter what you do, the whole idea that the personal is political...it's by default. Because I am involved in the punk community, that that in and of itself is a political act, especially in a country like the US. I think it's always felt very difficult for me on a personal level. I always felt like I had to prove myself to a large degree. There was a period of time when I was first getting involved when I didn't feel as comfortable being as explicitly political, because I felt like I didn't want to be tokenized, and I wanted to be also valued for my musical abilities and not purely because I'm a woman, or because I'm a woman of color. But as I've gotten older and been in a few bands, it's kind of come full circle, where it's more complex for me, and I do want to be more explicit, and it is important for me to see punk as a political space.

MRR: Yeah, I feel like being able to check into and out of the reality of politics is a privilege, which it sounds like is what a lot of y'all are saying.

Cella: Yeah, creative spaces like art and music still favor the privileged. Like, I only started playing music two years ago, and prior to that, I was always on the sidelines. I never thought it was something that I partake in. That's why I think it was really important to find people to play music with who supported me as a woman of color and who were



able to take me in and help me grow musically.
Tiff: Yeah, I also didn't start learning my instrument until a few years ago. And punk has never been something that I've had the privilege of my family supporting me, although they pushed me to play the music they wanted me to play. It was definitely something that I did very, very independently of them. That's felt hard at times. It felt almost like I didn't get the same headstart in learning how to be in a band, or playing in bands, how to tour, or do anything in a band, really, recording...I didn't know anything about gear. All of that stuff felt really intimidating to me but I felt like I really had to educate myself. I really learned how to identify people who I could talk to and who wanted to share knowledge with me. I still really value those people for answering any of my questions and being patient and not condescending.
Cassidy: Yeah, I agree fully with all of those points. I've come to shows here for a long time, being young and taking the train into the city. There's better representation now, but like everyone's said, the work isn't done. There's still shows and fests where there's no diversity. Playing in bands as a female, I think it's weird growing up always playing drums in a band. Like I never realized that I would encounter sexist things. And even, I think it was a year ago, I got made fun of by another touring band for just being a female drummer and carrying gear and stuff. I still see that stuff going on. They assume if you're a female, all gear is new to you and even I think that sometimes bands don't get judged on the same scale as maybe a band of all white males or something. It's like, "Oh, well it's made up of...*them*," so you know. It's like just because it's different people in a band, it's not judged the same way.

MRR: There's an assumption of competence, maybe.
Brian: Or like, "Good for a band of girls", or something.
Cassidy: Yeah, all the classic bullshit. Like, "I've never seen girls play that hard," or something.
Tiff: Like the de facto is a band of all dudes or all white dudes and then there's the subcategory of like, "Oh yeah you're good for this identity." But I feel like people are always trying to box you in mentally, and I think that happens subconsciously a lot whether or not people want to admit it. As far as musical competency goes, a thing that has always kind of bothered me is that a lot of the dudes who are virtuosos at their instruments or whatever, they got their guitars or drum kits or whatever when they were like ten for Christmas...
Brian: Probably even younger than that...
Tiff: Yeah, like maybe even younger, and a lot of us didn't have that.

MRR: And let it be known that I know that Brian wanted Tiff to be in this band to take on playing the leads in some of the songs.
Tiff: Brian has a lot of the sick solos.
Brian: We split 'em. Yeah just as they were saying, I was encouraged to play this music as a child, and most of the people here at this table were not.
Cassidy: Yeah, and I dabble with recording stuff, and people are still always shocked by that, that I would even find that interesting, just because I'm a girl. I've always loved music and am fascinated by that. But it's just some weird thing, I guess. I don't know. But I am glad that Philly is a pretty good place right now, but it's not perfect obviously.

MRR: Recently, people outside of Philly seem pretty excited about punk here. A lot of people are moving here. Can you talk about your thoughts about Philly and some of the stuff going on in the Philly scene going on right now?
Nneka: Well, there have been a couple of people that have been starting up new bands and trying to start new fests. There's Break Free Fest, which is happening May 2017 that's centered around people of color in punk. I think that will be great because I'm all about solidarity and having spaces for expression for communities that historically do not have that opportunity. LAVA Space has been a crucial space in Philadelphia for years—it not only serves the DIY community, but they do so much work for the West Philly community. Community Futures Lab is another space doing important work. We need to create more spaces that aren't just for punk or DIY, but also serve to uplift members of the community in Philadelphia. We need to continue to bridge the gap, and I think spaces like LAVA and Community Futures Lab help close that.

MRR: Yeah, it's like more community building, not just a benefit that only happens once that gives once, like philanthropy, but building a community with people that you or punks might not normally connect with.
Nneka: I think LAVA is a model for how that can be done and how it can be sustained. I think there are things to be learned and things that can be changed from that model, but I think it's a good place to start.
Brian: I mean within our own community of friends, I feel there's a lot of exciting bands that I'm really into, which is cool. It's kind of an exciting time for new bands popping up in Philly.
Cella: Yeah I think visibility is definitely key, and I hope to see more faces in bands that look like me, or people who have seen us and are like, "I could definitely do this." Just serving as inspiration for others who might not necessarily think that this space is for them, but it's totally meant for them, and we should make space for them.
Tiff: I think with Philly specifically, it has attracted a lot of punks to move here. I think that the city is generally seen as affordable and accessible and that's cool, but I think any time anyone moves somewhere, they really have to be conscious of their role in the community that they're entering, and hopefully not just acting as a tourist, like a temporary visitor.
Cassidy: That's a good point. Like the shows get bigger and bigger, but things don't necessarily change. The scene's huge, and there's always so much going on, but it can be distracting from actually thinking about anything, or people just take it for granted, and it's just like "Oh there's something to do every night", but it doesn't move much beyond that.

MRR: Yeah, like how many people who have moved here are connected with issues that a lot of Philadelphians face, like opiate addiction or poverty? Are they thinking about those things when they move here? And how they impact people? I'm not sure if people always are. I mean, I moved here three years ago. I'm not from here.
Nneka: If we're talking about music, I think Moor Mother is someone who I'm very excited about. Camae's been doing stuff in Philly for years. She did Rockers in Philly for, I think it was going on ten years the last round...it ended this past summer. But it was an annual fest that brought together all of these different types of music in punk, metal, hip-hop, whatever. The unifying factor was in some way, you were an identity that has felt disenfranchised or marginalized and it gave you the space to be you. And it was about taking up space, and taking space back, at least for me. I think that was really an important space and thing to happen in Philly. And now Camae as Moor Mother, releasing *Fetish Bones*, talking about police brutality and being black, being a woman, and being queer in America...That is something. When you think about living in the world we see now, those voices are important. I think having that voice come out of Philadelphia is also important. Philadelphia has a history that it likes to erase regarding its use of force and police brutality against black bodies, in the form of the MOVE bombings, etc. And to have that voice and to have that narrative come out of Philly is really important.
Tiff: Yeah, she's definitely a really important member of the greater Philadelphia community in general. She's involved in so much and she has been working so hard for so long and is only maybe now just starting to get more of the recognition she deserves. I think another point I wanted to touch on was the influx of punks moving to Philly. I think when a punk community is huge, it also starts to segregate itself. Nneka and I grew up in the New Brunswick punk community that was super small, and because of that, all different types of

punks or people in general were really inclusive. A lot of shows were pretty mixed bills, and people were actually friends with each other on a personal basis and still are to this day, like way more than I've seen in Philly. That's a downside for sure. You don't get to connect across the board as much.

MRR: More stratified.

Nneka: I mean yeah, I see that in New York, too. I guess that exists whenever you have a big city. But I would say that Philadelphia does a really good job pulling those connections and bridging the gaps in certain ways. I think that continuing that work and continuing to facilitate those conversations and thinking of ways that you can move forward and start actions in response to our current political narrative, is critical.

MRR: For each of you, what are you currently listening to and what's some stuff in your regular rotation?

Nneka: I've been listening to the new Tribe Called Quest on repeat, non-stop 'cause that shit is straight fire.

Brian: Is Phife on that?

Nneka: Yeah, he's on a couple tracks. But yeah, that came out, what, two days after the election? And what a time for that record to come out. Just, I dunno, I could write a dissertation on this goddamn album 'cause it's so good. I've been listening to that and I've been listening to Solange's new album. I guess the unifying factor with Solange's album, again—another masterpiece of 2016, in a year of shit—and Tribe's is the conversations coming from black voices and uplifting black lives and just talking about those issues. To have a song called "FUBU"—For Us, By Us, it's like, I know you wanna sing along, I know you want to be able to say the N word, but just don't. Just listen. Like that is such a big part of the narrative we're seeing today. Yes, I know that you as a white person may be used to saying whatever you want and you really want to have your say and co-opt our shit, but no. Just listen, take this in, and just hear us out, and let us have our space. Like that is just so powerful for me, so that is what I'm rockin'.

Brian: I'd say it's cool to live in Philly because I go to shows and am more interested in seeing the local bands than the touring bands, which is really cool. I feel like I could list off so many, so maybe I will, I dunno. You know, there's like, I don't know if I should even point out the bands that we're in 'cause I like the bands that people here are in. But you know, there's Blank Spell, there's Wild At Heart, there's Devil Master, who rock.

Cella: Devil Master for sure.

Brian: And there's Pollen and Interloper and you know, all kinds of bands here that I really like. But, if we're talking about punk bands outside of Philadelphia that I really like, I guess I would say the band that I've seen this year that I love the most is Triage from Canada...

Nneka: Up the young punx.

Brian: Oh they're amazing. I can't believe how young they are, and they just rock.

Cassidy: I think Conman too...one of my favorites.

Brian: Conman is so sick. But I was lucky enough to see Rixe a bunch and I would say that band rules and maybe is the best band in punk right now.

Cella: I've been listening to Barcelona's new record. I think it's really savage and primal and I love it.

Tiff: Earlier we mentioned the Cambodian rock compilation, *Cambodia Rock Spectacular: Groove Club Vol. 2*. The Groove Club stuff is really good. But I also really love the *Saigon Rock and Soul Vietnamese* compilation. That's one of my favorites that I feel like I could put on at any give point and never get tired of. Nina Simone—I watched *What Happened, Miss Simone?*, the documentary on her life, with Cella a day or two after the election

and it felt painfully relevant. And this isn't really a current artist, but Missy Elliott is an endless source of inspiration for me...
Brian: That's so interesting to me... I like that.
Tiff: She just defies so many things and she's really just doing whatever the fuck she wants to do. And I think she's a genius. So when I'm feeling down, I like to be inspired by her.
Brian: You finally have that Virginia pride.
Tiff: Oh, is she from Virginia?
Brian: Oh yes she is.
Tiff: She had a pretty crazy life that she survived, too. Current punk bands I'm into... Triage and Conman-- the Toronto bands are great, and they're also just great people and a great community. I really enjoy Exit Order. Having gone to so many shows, it's hard to get blown away by a live performance, but Exit Order always does it for me. I would also say Haram—I'm so glad they are out there. In Mexico, I really dig Anti-Sex and Riña. Blanca, who's in both bands, is a really amazing person and we're inspired by a lot of the same bands. I finally got to see Anti-Sex perform, which was awesome.
Cassidy: I think Kaleidoscope from New York, too. They're super interesting, so I'm excited to hear what they put out next. There's also these comps called *Insane Music for Insane People*. They're from Belgium, but they're really scary. And there's some nice songs on them. But they're fun to listen to—I'll put them on if I'm cleaning my room or reading. They're just weird.
Tiff: I forgot to mention this really old French compilation...
Cassidy: *Rhapsodie*?
Tiff: Yes! *Rhapsodie en France*. It's just an incredible collection of crazy French punk songs from the 80s. A...very good attitude is what I would say, haha. Really cool songs.
Brian: And maybe GISM *Detestation*...
Cella: Oh yeah, that's a classic.
Brian: Like, three times a week.

MRR: What's next for S-21? Any new recordings or tours coming up?
Brian: We have our record coming out called *Year Zero*. It's four songs, a 7 inch...
Cassidy: In stores now.
Nneka: iTunes.
Cassidy: Napster.
Nneka: Kazaa.
Brian: Via World Gone Mad and Slugsalt Records. And then we're going to play Everything's Not OK in Oklahoma City in March.

MRR: So, you're all touring out there?
Brian: Yeah.
Tiff: Going back to how this election has affected us, with a band with so many women of color, we've had to really take into account where we feel safe touring, because there are some pockets of America that will not feel welcome to us. Maybe they never have, but now, especially so. Those communities feel emboldened to express their hate, and that's the type of thing that we have to consider moreso than ever now. And it's a harsh reality.

MRR: The record is called "Year Zero." Can you elaborate a bit on the meaning behind the title?
Cella: Year Zero is the political ideal that the Khmer Rouge introduced when they took power in 1975, and it was basically signified the beginning of their revolution. So, anything prior to that was pretty much obliterated. There was no system of money, no schools, no concept of family. They returned to a strict agrarian society. They split up people into "New People" and "Old People." "New People" included city dwellers, the educated, civil servants, and creative types. Anyone who was classified as "New People" were enemies of the state who needed to be destroyed. In the end, 1.7 million people perished under their regime. So, it's definitely a very heavy title.
Tiff: Coincidentally, Year Zero is coming out in the year that Trump is going to take power, and I can't help but kind of draw that parallel, because it really feels like the dawning of a new era...
Brian: For going backwards.
Cella: Exactly.
Brian: One problem is that to me, or to some people, it's this awakening, but there's been so many people out there that have felt this way for so long, and this is just sort of everyone just grasping that idea now.

MRR:Yeah, it feels very politically relevant in a really chilling way. A lot of this is really heavy subject material. I don't know how people can not be having these conversations right now, personally, so thank you for talking about all of those things. To end on a positive note, I want to talk about all of the really great things that you all do outside of the band. You guys do a lot, you're all busy people—what do you do outside of the band? What other bands, projects are you involved in musically, artistically, and career-wise?
Nneka: I'm a nurse. It's weird to feel like I'm living a double life sometimes. But the ideals are the same in terms of why I make music and why I chose my career. It's for the betterment of myself and other people. So I always look at nursing in that way, that I'm using my skills and myself as a human to help someone at their most vulnerable point, and I think that's what music has done for me in a lot of ways. Outside of S-21, I've been writing solo stuff over the course of a few years. A lot of personal stuff, a lot of things dealing with my issues with mental health and loss and stuff like that. It's been a good outlet and way of addressing a lot of the things that I never really talk about.
Brian: I play in other bands—Latex and Blackout. And I feel like I'm lucky enough to have a job that I like. I roast coffee. I like it, I enjoy it. It's nice, and most people have jobs that they don't like. And I am glad that I like my job, and that's not to say it's not stressful sometimes, but...
Tiff: I work for the same coffee company as Brian. It's a food service job, and I'm lucky enough

to have a few people there who kind of feel like an extended family to some degree. I'm also in a band with Natalie called Wild At Heart, and that is a very exciting and musically different band for me. I also play guitar in that and it's very fun. I collage, paint, and take photos sometimes. I like to take care of plants.

Cella: I'm a developer at Big Cartel. It's pretty cool to work for a place that is dedicated to helping independent artists and musicians. I think as a tech company they are still very much DIY and share a lot of the same values I have, which is something of an anomaly for the industry. As a woman, I see a lot of parallels with the tech industry that I've faced in the punk scene in that it's very white male dominated. So, I try to help out in organizations that help women and children from marginalized backgrounds learn how to code.

MRR: That's cool, what's that called?

Cella: Girl Develop It and Coded By Kids.

Cassidy: I wish I learned how to do that. I work in an office. I work a pretty stale, but fine job. But it makes me enjoy the things I do outside of it more. I play in other bands and draw stuff. Blank Spell, I play guitar. Devil Master, I play bass. And in Cape of Bats, I drum.

MRR: And you record sometimes, too?

Cassidy: Yeah... sometimes.

Brian: You kind of record a lot, though. All of Haldol, Blank Spell...

Tiff: Me and Cella's first band together, Chondria...

Brian: Yeah you recorded our [S-21] demo, you recorded Latex's demo.

Natalie: And you recorded that song, "Devil on the Loose" that Latex recorded...

Brian: "Devil On the What Now"...when you sent me the email, you called it "Devil On the What Now" and I still think about it to this day, haha. And you drew the cover for our [S-21] record, which is awesome.

MRR: Any last thoughts?

Brian: I want to thank Chuck Meehan for everything that he's done for Philadelphia punk.

Cella: Chuuuuck.

Tiff: CHUCK!!!

Nneka: Chuck! Chuck! Chuck! Chuck!

S-21.bandcamp.com

S-21 are touring out to Everything Is Not OK in Oklahoma City. Catch them in your town:

March 5th: Montreal, QC
March 6th: Toronto, ON
March 7th: Cleveland, OH
March 8th: Chicago, IL
March 9th: Kansas City, MO
Marth 10th & 11th: Oklahoma City
March 12th: Bloomington, IN
March 13th: Pittsburgh, PA

Ever Feel Like You've Been Fucked?

New Feederz Record out soon on Slope Records. Frank Discussion, Clear Bob, and DH Peligro are back and taking aim at President Drumpf and the sheep he rode in on.

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BODY PRESSURE

Body Pressure is a hardcore punk band featuring people from bands such as Mindless, Hatred Surge and Innards. They've only existed for a little while but they have made their mark on Texas as one of the hardest, loudest and punishing new bands. They're gearing up to play a handful of fests around the US including Break Free and Everything is Not OK and a two-week tour, so we sat down outside a dumpster behind Tamale House in 30 degree weather and started talking to keep ourselves warm.

Interview and introduction by A.N. Photos by Cassandra Klepac, Dave Creaney, and Blair Trusdell.

MRR: The running joke with Austin is that nobody is from Austin. Are any of you from here and if not, what drew you to relocate?

Melissa: I am from Arlington (Texas) which is considered a part of DFW (Dallas-Fort Worth area). I grew up in the Dallas punk scene but I would go to shows in Austin and Houston frequently in my teens and early twenties. I moved to Colorado for a bit then back to Dallas but could never really settle back in so I moved to Austin.

Bryan: I am from Utah and moved to Austin when I was seven. So I guess, yeah, I'm from here.

Tommy: I was born in Riverside, California but I was raised in Fort Worth, Texas.

Faiza: I was born and raised in Austin but my family is from out of the country. My dad came to America from North Africa on a scholarship but then met my mom and was like, fuck it, I'm staying in America. It's kind of weird for me because I was born in Texas of all places but most of my family is spread across the world in other countries. I never met my grandmother. She never left Algeria.

MRR: So how did you all meet?

Faiza: I met Bryan when I was in high school. We were in a punk band together and have been playing music on and off since.

Melissa: I met Faiza when I moved back to Austin from Colorado shortly before we started Body Pressure. We hit it off right away.

Faiza: I didn't meet Tommy until the first time we all played as a band in a room together *[laughs]* but actually, Bryan and I played with Tommy's old band in California on tour years prior which we found out later.

Melissa: And I met Tommy when we both worked a burrito shop in DFW.
Faiza: I'm glad we all met. I am not sure where I would be without these people in my life.

MRR: Since you're a fairly new band, what was your first show like?
Faiza: Our first show was in October 2015 at this really great queer bar in Austin called Cheer Up Charlie's. We hadn't released our demo yet but we played with G.L.O.S.S, who fucking ruled. We also played with Elix-r, a really great band from the Denton area, Glue, an Austin hardcore staple, and the now defunct Feral Future. It was a great show but truth be told, I was fucking nervous as hell. I am basically the best at being the most nervous person on earth about everything.
Melissa: It was a high energy awesome show and we all left feeling really good about it. Afterwards, Faiza and I shared a vegan bacon cheeseburger from Arlo's.
Faiza: It was a true *Lady and the Tramp* moment.
Melissa: Tommy took a photo to commemorate it. *[laughs]*

MRR: Now that I know where you're from, who are you? Besides being in Body Pressure, what do you do?
Faiza: I work at a local arts non-profit called Motion Media Arts Center. I also teach film classes and make my own films and dumb art. Melissa and I are in another band together called Bondage with our friend Jessica.
Melissa: I'm a preschool teacher and nanny, I had to step away from teaching for a bit—it was and is shit pay and there's a lot of capitalistic bullshit politics that go along with it but I recently started teaching again at a new school in town that I'm happy about.
Bryan: Besides checking my phone a lot *[laughs]* I work in a restaurant as my "day job" but I make photographs and work on films mainly.
Tommy: I work at a co-op. I'm a cook there. Other than that, I don't do too much other than play music.

MRR: When did the punk / hardcore community become a part of your life?
Tommy: Being young in Fort Worth / the Metroplex and going to places like 1919 Hemphill, Ridglea Theater, The Door, Red Blood Club (in Dallas) and JJ's (in Denton) all changed my life.
Bryan: I was around sixteen—I discovered punk on the internet. I was raised Mormon so it was a way to get out of that cultural bubble and escape the bullshit that is religion.
Melissa: In 1996, when I was twelve, I went to Rock Fest and saw Jewel, Bush, and a bunch of '90s rock bands play. I was just in awe of seeing live music and I knew I wanted to be a part of music somehow right then. Later that year, I got into the Descendents and bands like that, and just continuously progressed and researched bands, dug deeper, and read thank you notes on records.
Faiza: I got into punk in middle school by listening to Nirvana, surprisingly. *Bleach* is still one of my favorite records. It was kind of a gateway band that introduced me to stuff like Black Flag and the Butthole Surfers. I also started liking shitty bullshit like the Casualties around then somehow. My first show was Agnostic Front and Casualties at the old Emo's in Austin when I was in seventh grade. *[laughs]* From there, my life was ruined forever. It's funny because I remember a defining moment of reading some dumb book about Nirvana that I begged my mom to buy me at the mall. In the book, Kurt painted his shoes with checkers on them to match a singer of a local punk band in his town. My mom wouldn't buy me checkered Vans because they were too expensive, so I ended up doing the same thing to a pair of black Ked knock-offs.

MRR: Faiza, you were in Hatred Surge and Mindless, two bands whose sounds were similar insofar as they are both fast and aggressive, both lyrically and instrumentally. Body Pressure's style is more no frills straightforward hardcore. Why the change?
Faiza: Hardcore has played a vital part in my life and always will. Hatred Surge and Mindless were both bands that made sense in my brain at the time and I consider them bands that changed the course of my life, truly. I wanted to be a part of fast, brutal sounds without the context of traditional punk structures. Being twenty and going on an almost five-week long tour with your bandmates is insane but so much fun and I am thankful I got to experience that with the people I did. There's really no defining reason as to why I am choosing to be a part of a different sound, I just felt like it. I wanted to do something different. Bryan played guitar in Mindless and he has been playing in bands with me for a long fucking time.
Bryan: Well, in Mindless I think we were trying to do something different, and were sort of outsiders within punk, if that makes sense. We didn't really fit into one specific genre and that was okay with us. With Body Pressure, I feel like we all really wanted to put the message of the band at the forefront and get a sound across that delivers something in a straightforward way.
Faiza: Crossed Out is still one of my favorites.

MRR: So what is your message with Body Pressure?
Faiza: I feel like that question could take hours to answer. The band itself serves as an outlet for us to not feel silenced and to be able to create something together equally—I know that sounds like something that is like a "duh" moment but you'd be surprised how bands are structured behind closed doors sometimes. I have shit I want and need to say and I'm going to fucking say it. I have never directly talked about some of the things I feel comfortable with, with this band.

MRR: Like what?
Faiza: Constant cultural conflicts I have being both Arab and Mexican and specifically the weird fucked up Muslim aspect of it all.

Being a first-generation American woman in my family and all the shit I wished as a kid for my family to do or conform to. Things I considered to be normal or the right way to live growing up, that ended up being a fucking farce. There are a lot of situations and memories, even today, that I am coming to terms with or discovering have had systematic impact on who the fuck I am or what I will be able to do due to bullshit social constructs. And you know, tons of other shit. I talk a lot. *[laughs]*

Melissa: I've been in bands with all men and even other women, but the other bands I have been in didn't really have a defined message or seemingly purpose other than fun. I liked them but I feel something different with Body Pressure.

MRR: Do you feel like you have had to overcome any obstacles with Body Pressure because of those reasons?

Faiza: There have been incidents in the past couple of months where men have questioned our lyrics for whatever reason or have gotten aggressive with me because they feel like "not all men" bullshit antics. It's not the first time, and it probably won't be the last but it's not going to stop me from being a part of punk or being in a band, even if I do feel like I have to fight harder sometimes to be heard. In a weird fucked up way, I am grateful that it gets a reaction out of their otherwise bigoted opinions.

MRR: What about the punk scene in Austin, how do you feel about it?

Faiza: Well, it's definitely gotten a lot bigger for the better but in the grand scheme of things, it is still a fairly small community compared to cities like New York or DC. There are a lot of great bands that have started within the last year like Mirror and Army who are fueling the punk fire, you know? I feel like Austin as a city is centered around corporate festivals like SXSW and Austin City Limits. Affordability is a huge issue here and has consistently been pushing people out for the past decade. It doesn't help that the city runs on bars and hotel tax mostly. DIY spots like 423 Tillery and the Broken Neck were short lived because of it. Right now, we have Shirley's Temple which I am grateful for existing and for the people who run it. When I was in high school, my friends and I used to do shows at a 24-hour laundromat until some asshole from the college paper came and took photos at the show then published an article about it. The owners ended up finding out and coming to the next show. The cops came and the owners just laughed and told them it was fine. We still do shows on the Pedestrian Bridge in downtown Austin. The bridge is above Town Lake and tends to shake a fuck load when there are hundreds of punks on it at 2:00 a.m.

Melissa: For me, growing up in the DFW punk scene watching bands like Wild//Tribe and Damage Case playing with Austin classics such as World Burns to Death at Red Blood Club, I love that a decade later, I end up in Austin playing shows with the same people. We are doing what we love and it's a community worldwide. Each scene brings its own energy. I love the energy the Austin punk scene adds to my experience with the Texas music scene as a whole.

MRR: You have a new promo tape out with two songs, "Prisoner" and "Us Against You." Do you have a release that these will be a part of in the future?

Faiza: Yes, we are working on writing for an upcoming release of some sort—we haven't decided what that would be but we wanted to get something out there a bit sooner.

MRR: What are your plans for 2017? Are you touring?

Faiza: We played This is Austin, Not that Great in January, which is a sick punk fest in our hometown. It was their second year.

Melissa: Then we are playing Everything is Not OK.

Faiza: And then Break Free in Philly which is being organized by our badass friend Scout. The fest is highlighting bands of color around the US and it's their first year. Everyone go, show your support and fucking stomp.

Melissa: And we're touring the east coast in March.

Faiza: Other than that, I think we're all just trying to keep our heads up above water.

MRR: Side note, thanks for the pink "Make Bigots Scared Again" shirt, it's probably one of the coolest shirts I'll sport this year. What made you choose baby pink?

Faiza: Because baby pink fucking rules

Tommy: Baby pink's a good color.

Bryan: I'm wearing baby pink right now.

Tommy: If you like hardcore, you should probably like baby pink.

MRR: Anything else that you would like to add?

Faiza: I want to give so much to San Antonio, El Paso, Corpus Cristi, and the Valley. Touring bands tend to skip over these cities and their surrounding areas for some reason and y'all need to cut that shit out. Go fucking play those places, don't just play for white people. Don't just play for white punks.

Melissa: All over the state, there are amazingly talented humans putting their heart and soul into something we all love and are grateful to be apart of. Shout out to all my DFW friends and bands that paved the way and had a big part in shaping who I am.

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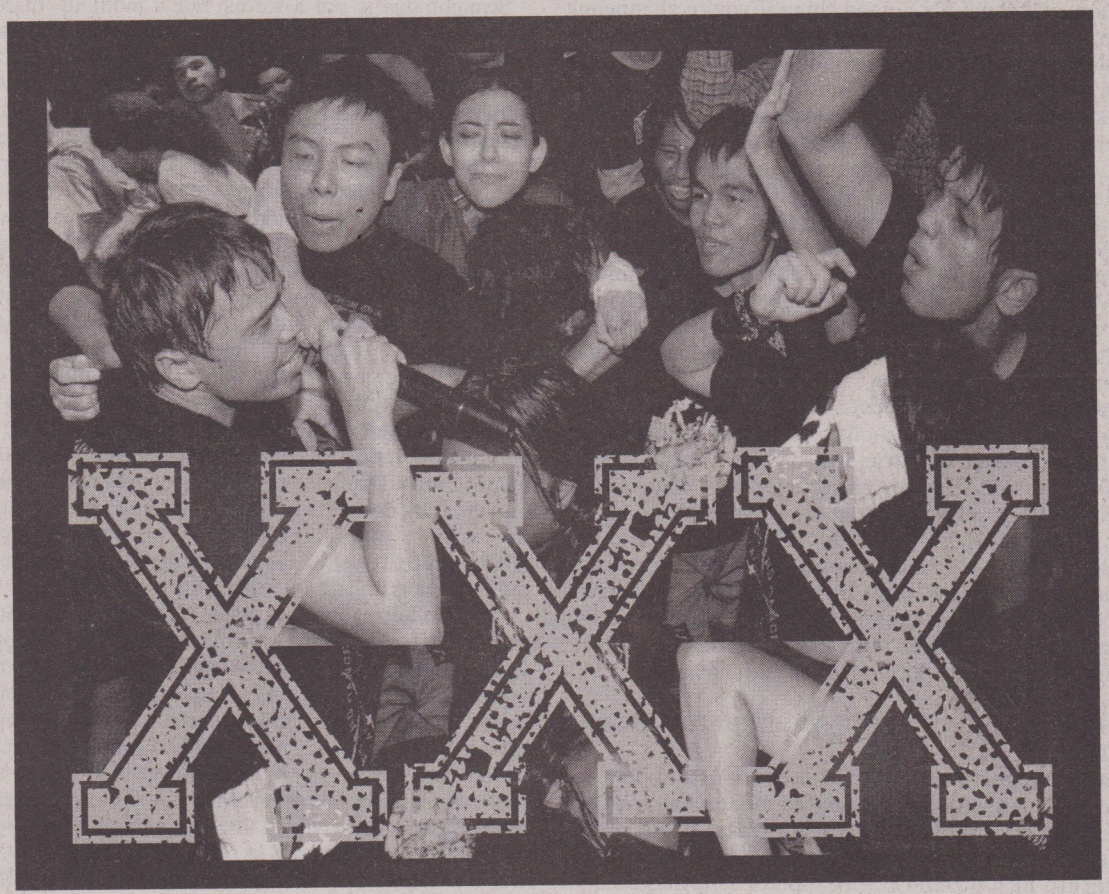
SECOND COMBAT

MALAYSIAN STRAIGHTEDGE

We spoke with Khai "Ein" Aziz about his commitment to fostering a straightedge community in Malaysia through his group Drug Free Youth and the band Second Combat.



MRR: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START A GROUP THAT ENVISIONS A DRUG FREE YOUTH?

Twenty years ago, my situation was really bad, and I stumbled and struggled through life. I've witnessed many of my friends die because of drugs. I used to get shamed in my neighborhood because my brother used to use drugs. At one point I decided that I had enough, and I started to realize that I had to do something about it, so instead of flowing with the negative surroundings I tried really hard to create something positive out of it. At the age of fourteen, every person has the desire and curiosity to experiment and try everything. It was crucial for me to not fall onto the same dark path lots of my friends were already on. I chose to stand out and take the positive side. I thought if I was able to do it, I'll also be capable of changing the community around me and ultimately make the world free of drugs. What encouraged me to make this change was the music I listened to and the books I read that had even higher ambitions, like stopping war, racism, and discrimination.

MRR: HOW HAVE BANDS INSPIRED YOU TO CHANGE THE WORLD?

I used to listen to Green Day, NOFX, and Rain Seed, and most of them inspired me to change the world, change the community, and stop being a slave to my own personal desires. The songs' lyrics were promoting a good lifestyle and a good environment.

I imagined them talking right to me, so I choose to believe them and their words, until I came across a band called Minor Threat. They were also promoting a positive lifestyle, and they pushed me into being more positive than I already was. They empowered me to change myself and become more environmentally conscious. Minor Threat has always prompted this notion of being young and not consuming the things that you don't need and taking care of the environment and the world surrounding you. When I listened to their songs I got this desire to be like them. Other bands also inspired me to love animals, and I eventually became a vegetarian in 2004. I wanted to challenge myself. I became a conscious person who is fully aware of what is going on with the world around me, and that's all because of the music I listened to.

Some people rebel without a cause, rebelling against the government, against their parents, or rebelling because it's in their nature. I think it's a good thing if you're channeling that against a system that destroys you, against what will eventually harm you, instead of rebelling without a purpose. I rebelled against the bigger system that controls us and the minor system inside me which was dragging me down each time I wanted to be good. I used this approach to inspire other people. I went to the kids in my area and told them to listen to this music and watched them get inspired the same way I was. Some became straightedge, and it makes me happy to see some follow my path. Since the movement started, six straightedge bands started in Klang Valley. We started with Second Combat, but after that lots of bands started to follow such as Channel X , Neverend, Last Minute, Home Run, and Kids On The Move. But my dream was bigger, and I wanted straightedge culture to reach areas other than Malaysia.

I've always been into musicians who sing for a cause, and Toby Morse is one of my role models. He invested his time for spreading the message of a drug free life. He went to schools and universities and tried to reach major part of people to spread his message, so he inspired me to be like him and to spread my own message. Immortal Technique is a hip-hop band and I find them very interesting because of their political lyrics. The Cranberries and Anti-Flag contributed to making me hate war and grow up dreaming of stopping it and spreading the message of peace, but all of this was before Minor Threat entered my life and made this huge change in me.

MRR: How did you start your band Second Combat?

When I was in high school I used to skateboard and play in a band, then one of my friends introduced me to punk rock and hardcore. I usually listened to the mainstream bands on the radio like Green Day, but that new genre got my attention and after I finished high school I started a punk band and called it Second Combat.

Most of the band members were my friends who used to skateboard with me; we had the same passion for music and same interests. Some of them were also from my previous band. We decided [that with Second Combat] we needed to be serious; we were determined to have albums, play lots of shows, and tour around the world.

At first we weren't straightedge, but in 1999 we became the first straightedge band in Malaysia. My journey began to inspire more people to become straightedge and fight drugs. We had an incident where one of our band members was using drugs before shows. He was always absent from the rehearsals, and he was always high. Most of the band had problems with drugs in their lives. My brother was also on drugs and made me suffer in my childhood, and by coincidence one of the band members had also the same problem with his brother. We started to wonder why people were always on drugs and why the percentage of drug addicts was so high in our city. Later we heard about straightedge and we were surprised to see some of the fans and audience were also living in a straightedge way. We thought it was so cool and we wanted to try. I said "Why not? We won't lose a thing after all!" so we took the step and have been straightedge since 1999.

MRR: What is straightedge for Second Combat?

For some people, straightedge is a personal choice to avoid alcohol and stop poisoning themselves, but for us it is our war with the world surrounding us; it is our purpose. I say straightedge is politics and the ability to do without. It's an important foundation in our ideology. In a system completely dependent on intoxication, straightedge cannot be anything other than a weapon of political and social resistance.

Straightedge is not a status, nor a moment. Instead it is a revolutionary process. It begins with the need and the awareness to give up all the common drugs and upgrade into a stage where you start to realize that you are not only dependent on those things. I say straightedge is political because of many issues. The world is being burned in every corner at the speed of a light. Straightedge is for every suffering being on this planet that needs our help. Straightedge is political for every indigenous land that is being exploited by drug dealers and governments that don't care a bit about its cultural life. Straightedge is political when animals are being murdered on a massive scale, in a slaughterhouse, in vivisection labs, at circuses, at zoos.

We are consuming endlessly, working more, living less, and giving into the insanity. Being poor is a crime. In this man-made hell, the government wants poor people out of sight so they can have more wealth and have more spaces to infect this world with their corporate industry like Carlsberg, Marlboro, McDonald's. Industries like oil, drugs, guns, meat, clothing, you name it, are all friends of government and kings. They will step on who they decide is in their way. The earth is being ravaged by machines that built to destroy this paradise. No more we will tolerate the unjust system of wage slavery that exploits our lives via taxes, tolls, and policemen.

We didn't want the next generations to become like us in the past, getting high at shows with nowhere to go. Living in a third world country is different. We have to be political because of our system. It's depressing, and suppression is at every corner. Be it drugs, foods, banking, clothes, agriculture, media: it is all being monopolized by greedy monsters and gangsters. For us this is a time when companies are more powerful and have the right to make decision for the government and human beings. They are in the system controlling land, sea, and air. They are the kings who make decisions now. In reaction to this cruelty we declare war on them by boycotting their products and the lifestyle that they created for us. We as a society had been the products of their laboratories, puppets of a media that manipulates news and advertisements to say what's good for us and how to live our lives. To resist mind control is straightedge. We can't be bought.

MRR: What is the relation between punk music and drugs?

Well, not all punk music promotes the positive lifestyle, but in punk rock, we are promoting choices that we all must respect. We have to respect that some people are still smoking or drinking. That's their own choice! At the same time we want to promote our lifestyle, *our* choice, to everyone and especially to those who still have the chance to change and be straightedge like us.

The relationship between punk rock and drugs is like a family

relation actually, because punk is all about rebelling and showing the anger toward the stuff we don't like. We are about shouting at the things that are destroying us and destroying our world. You have the choice to be whatever you want in punk. There is no set of rules, no law. We set the laws by ourselves.

MRR: WHAT ARE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SECOND COMBAT SO FAR?

We have almost ten releases and we were the first Malaysian band to tour in Europe. We have been interviewed many times, on the radio, on TV, and in magazines. We are not aiming for the Grammys nor to be the best band in the world; all we want is for our idea to be spread all over the world.

MRR: WHAT DIFFERENCES DID YOU NOTICE BETWEEN EUROPE AND MALAYSIA?

There were a lot of differences. From what I saw, everything moved quite slowly. The Malaysian government is more eager to modernize, to create the biggest and the tallest malls and buildings. Compared to Europe we are still far, far behind. I guess Europe had enough of their modernization and is now focused on the sustainability of its environment. As a developing country, Malaysia is just starting up.

We are five years behind you. We don't have any record shops, merch shops, festivals, or stuff like that related to hardcore. That's why hardcore here can't be big as it is in Western countries. Our government used to oppose what we did before and made it hard for us to organize a gig or concert, because the media had manipulated news saying bad things about hardcore / punk. There was a time when hardcore / punk were banned because they thought we were worshipping the devil. It was really a mess for us, having no gigs at all.

MRR: DESPITE THE MISERY, THE WARS, THE SOCIAL CONFLICTS, THE DISASTERS (LIST WITHOUT END...), DOES SECOND COMBAT BELIEVE IN A BETTER WORLD? IS IT IMPORTANT TO FIGHT FOR IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS?

Writing good lyrics has been very important for us since the '90s. We've been writing about all the critical issues like war, discrimination, exploitation, racism, and empowerment. Yes, we believe in a better world. That's what we stand up for. We lived in the end of times. The people before us had been guilty of using and taking over the world by exploiting the forest, sea, land, agriculture, and animals. We had to suffer for their action. They had been so greedy that they kill whoever or whatever that trying to stop them. You can't stop Exxon Mobile, Shell, McDonald's, KFC, Monsanto, the United Nations, the IMF, and the World Bank now. They are too powerful; they monopolized the world and they are the system now. We can believe in better world. But it will be impossible for now. I can say that I am safe for now but not the future generations. We are going back into dark ages.

MRR: ARE YOU A VEGETARIAN / VEGAN? IS IT EASY TO EAT A PLANT-BASED DIET IN MALAYSIA?

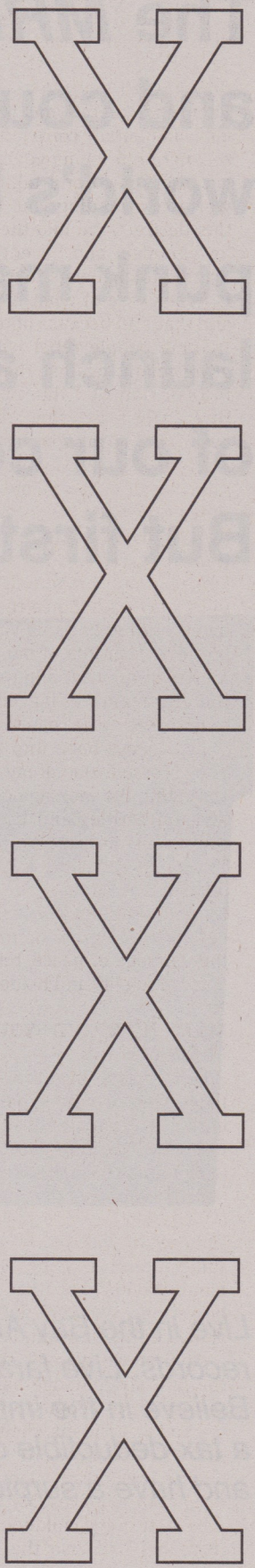
Three of us are still vegetarian. It is pretty tough to be a vegetarian in most Asian countries because of a mix of culture and habits. Sometimes, being a vegetarian gets you labelled as a freak or just strange because there is a lack of understanding about vegetarian diets and how one can actually survive quite well on it here. My friends are meat eaters and aren't all that big on vegetarian food. I guess for some, it's a novel idea to have a dish or a whole meal that is just purely meat / fish free. I hate it when the people around me make a big deal about the vegetarian thing and complain when there's a vegetarian at their dinner table. Look, we vegetarians are quite adaptive creatures and we'll tell you when the restaurant choice is not OK!

MRR: WHAT'S YOUR MESSAGE TO NEW STRAIGHTEDGE EMBRACERS?

Straightedge is not just being drug and alcohol free. It's about standing for your community, even in the smallest stuff. You need to have courage to focus on helping our world and helping yourself; you need to be a catalyst and an activist about your world rights. Maybe in other parts of the world like Europe, straightedge is more of a community, but here in Malaysia it's pretty new.

MRR: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM NOW?

I see myself as the ambassador of the Malaysian drug free community. I see people more conscious of the world, fighting for their right to live. I see more kids becoming straightedge and trying to inspire more and more of them. I see myself training more bands and helping people worldwide. I see myself talking about my message around every corner in this planet. I see a drug free youth center in every state around the world.



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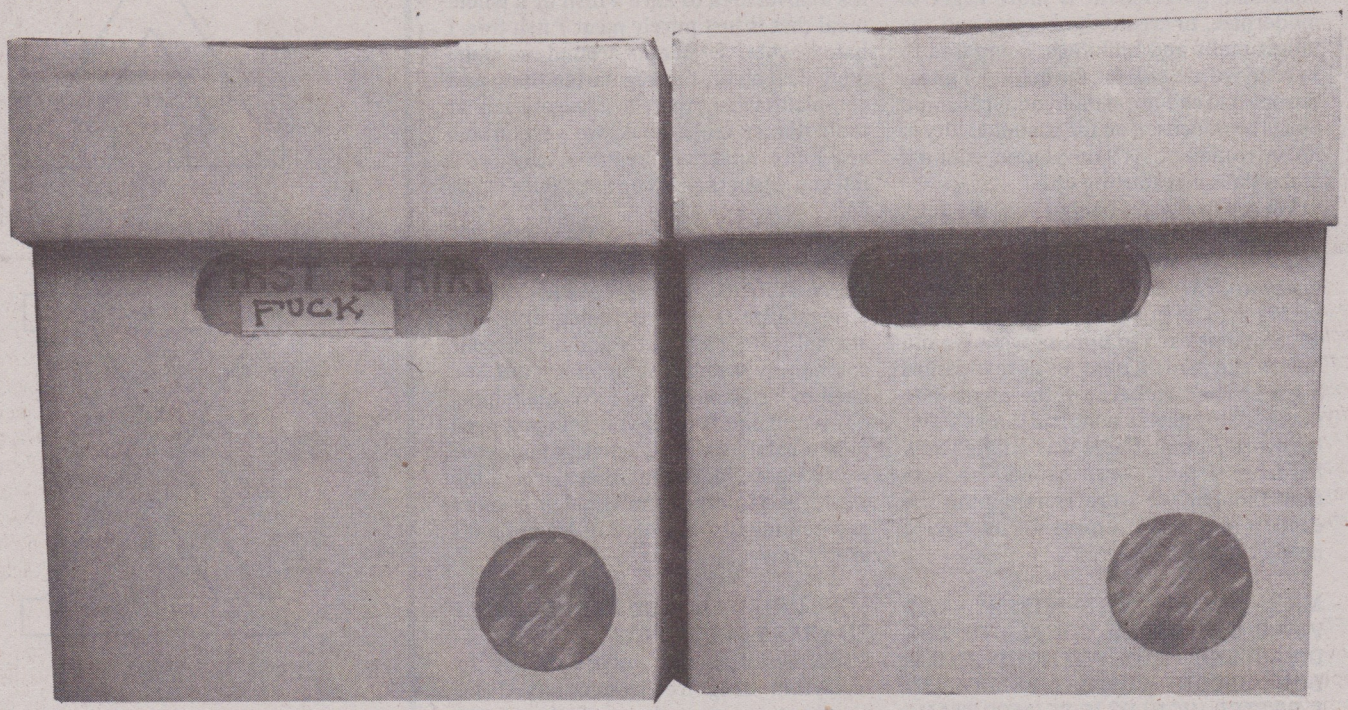

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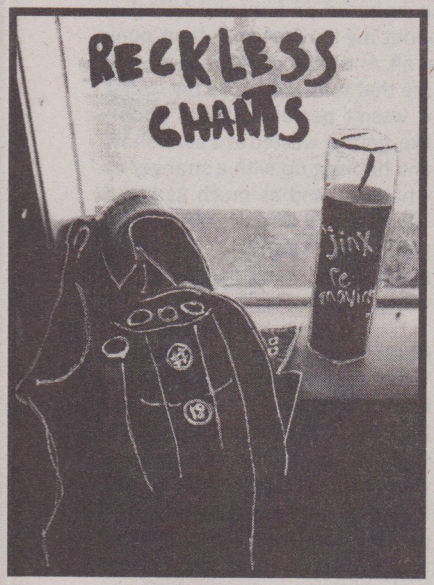
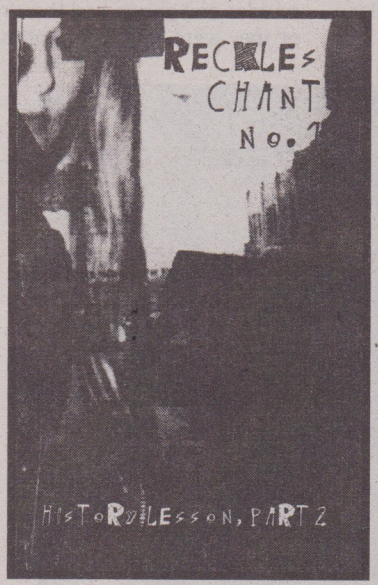
WHAT WE TALK ABOUT When We Talk About Punk:

An Interview with Zinester and Writer Jessie Lynn McMains





Jessie Lynn McMains is a long-time zinester and writer from Racine, Wisconsin, a small, industrial city over which she rules as the town's official Poet Laureate. Seeming to draw influence in equal parts from punk bands, ex-fuck buddies, and Raymond Carver, Jessie writes about being simultaneously too punk and not punk enough, and fuck you if that's a problem. Her new book, What We Talk About When We Talk About Punk, *came out last year from Punch Drunk Press, an imprint of Pioneers Press. I got a chance to ask her a few questions about her work.*

Interview and introduction by Nathaniel Kennon Perkins.

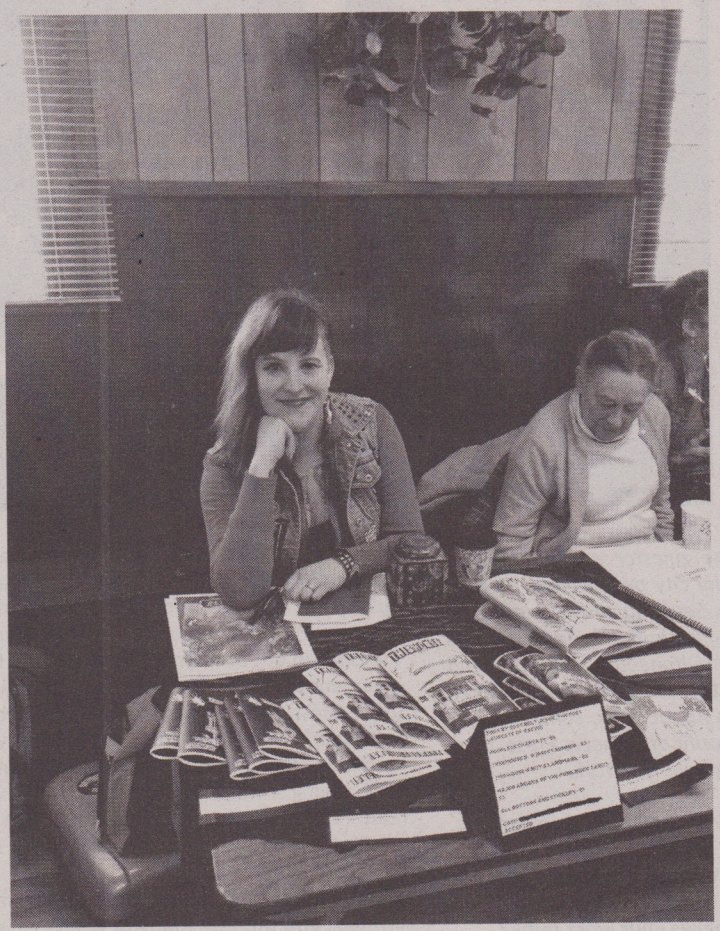
MRR: I'm particularly curious about your view on the role of punk culture outside of just music. How does the punk ethic apply to the literary world? What makes your work punk?
To me, one of the most important aspects of punk culture is the do-it-yourself (or with friends) ethic. Applied to music and art and film and literature, that means putting out your own work and your friends' work work because none of you have been recognized by the mainstream. You know, you make a short film, and your friends let you screen it before their band plays a house show. Or you have an art show in someone's punk house, or just wheatpaste your shit on brick walls and lamp posts so anyone can see it. Or you start a fanzine or a record label to put out your own writing and music, and that of your friends. In punk, or with the punk ethic, you don't need to have an MFA in Creative Writing, or a book deal, to get your work out into the world. You can just write something, paste it up into zine form, and make some photocopies, and you're an author.

As far as what makes my work punk...There's the obvious thing, which is that a lot of my writing is about punks, and punk culture, and punk music. But there are other things that make my work punk, no matter what I'm writing about: energy and attitude. I try to maintain a sense of rawness in everything I write. It's not that I don't edit, but I try not to polish things so much that anything that's uniquely me is taken out of them, or so much that they lose all sense of immediacy or urgency. That's what I mean by energy—I want all my writing to have the restless energy and driving urgency of the best punk songs. And by "attitude," I mean that I'm going to write what I want, and how I want, no matter what anyone else says. Austin Kleon made this image a couple years back, saying it was his own personal New Year's resolution. The text on it read: "Less 'like us on Facebook' and a bit more 'fuck you if you don't like it.'" It's like that.

MRR: Most literary journals are pretty dry and seem to stick to certain formulas and themes, many of which fall well outside the realm of punk. Do you feel like your identity as a "punk writer" has ever limited you in your literary career?
Oh, absolutely. That whole "fuck you if you don't like it" thing? I used to live by that a little too much. I wasn't rejected by the mainstream / not punk literary world, I rejected *it*. I had two books published when I was a teenager, both by the same publishing house. They weren't one of the Big Guys, but they were bigger than any place I've worked with since, and they weren't in any way punk. The first book ended up being a journal-writing guide for teenage girls, but it was supposed to be a survival guide for girls in junior high and high school, with journaling being only one part of that. My initial manuscript had a lot of "fuck the patriarchy" stuff in it, because I was a baby riot grrrl. They made me take all that out. They also made me censor my personal website—I had a website really early on—because they didn't want people who read the book to find it and then get mad at them. I was furious: they wouldn't let me tell girls it was okay to be gay or bi, they wouldn't let me talk about my own queerness on my website, and they also took out all my recommendations of my punk, riot grrrl, and slam poetry faves.

It's sort of hilarious in retrospect: no shit, they didn't want me suggesting that fifteen-year-old girls listen to Bikini Kill and Ani DiFranco and read Kathy Acker and Nicole Blackman? But at the time, I was pissed. And this was right around the same time I started writing zines, and it made me think that zines and self-publishing were the better way to go. In my zines, I could be my angry feminist bisexual punk rock self, and no one was going to tell me otherwise.

But then I got a little too stuck in that Me vs. The Publishing Establishment mindset. I continued writing and self-publishing, I studied Creative Writing in college (I don't have an MFA, but I do have a BA in Creative Writing), and I got published in some smaller literary mags and some bigger punk fanzines. But I was so stuck on the idea that any established / well-known lit mag or publishing company would either be too uptight to even get my stuff at all, or would censor the hell out of it, that for a long time I didn't really try to break out of the insular world of fanzines and punk.



MRR: How long have you been writing zines, and how has your work evolved since you first started? What differences do you see between your first zine and your most recent work?

It's funny—when I say I've been publishing zines since 1994, people assume I'm a lot older than I am. I'm only in my mid-thirties, but I published my first zine at age twelve. My early zines sucked. I didn't produce a zine I don't totally cringe at now until I'd been doing it for a few years, and even then it took another year or two before I really hit my stride. Early on, I tried too hard to make my zines fit a certain formula. My first zines were modeled after riot grrrl zines, so there were a lot of poorly thought-out feminist rants and stuff like that. I grew out of that, but then I tried to do the "punk rock fanzine" thing—I interviewed bands, I reviewed 7"s, and then occasionally I'd have a comic a friend drew or a poorly thought-out anarchist rant or a rant about elitism in the punk scene or something. It wasn't until I read more quote-unquote "perzines" and decided I wanted to write more stories from my own life that I started making halfway-decent zines. Because at that same time, I realized I didn't have to fit my zine into a certain formula; that I could have stories about my life alongside fiction, poetry, essays, reviews, interviews, anything. I still think that's the beauty of zines. If I want to write a zine that has an in-depth personal story about depression, plus an essay about reproductive rights, some book reviews, a short piece of speculative fiction, and a recipe for soy-nog, I can.

MRR: How do these differences mirror your evolving perception of what punk is and isn't?

There are a couple ways my work, and my definitions of punk, have evolved: one relates to the Me vs. The Publishing Establishment thing. For a long time, I thought that if I had any amount of success with my writing—especially outside of the punk / zine world—it meant I was a sellout. It wasn't a conscious choice, but for a while, whenever I got close to any modicum of writing success outside of punk or zines, I sabotaged it in some way. And then I complained about how The Establishment just didn't fucking get me, man. Once I realized that I was doing that, I made a concerted effort to stop sabotaging myself. I think that's an insidious thing about punk—because most of us are anti-establishment in some way, whenever we start to break out of it a little, or make any money off of what we love to do, it freaks us out, and we think: "What have I become?" Like somehow we're more pure if we work shit jobs forever and make our art in obscurity. Once I got over that and stopped sabotaging myself, I started building my career the way I wanted it to be, on my own terms, and really, what's more punk than that? The other thing is that I've lost fans over the years. Some of the small fanbase I had left when I departed from what they thought I was about. For a while, most of my zines were either fiction that was about murder and ghosts and the circus or based on fairy and folktales, or they were long form stories about my life, but not about punk at all. And I had people actively tell me that they didn't like my stuff if it wasn't personal stories about, like, getting wasted at a punk show and hooking up with a stranger or whatever. And as much as I said "fuck anyone who doesn't get the punk thing," I also said "fuck these punks if they can't hang with the other stuff I write."

MRR: In the title essay, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Punk," you write, "We turn our lives into legends with the stories we tell each other...Some of those things sound a little bit like bragging, and maybe for some people they are, but they're also a punk form of storytelling, and a way to make connections. Because if someone tells you a tale like that, unless they're a complete jerk, they're hoping to hear your stories in return." Here you are, putting all these stories out into the world. What stories do you hope to hear in return?

I want to hear about how you got into punk. Whether it was because you had an older sibling who was into it, or some kid in your town or at your school was a punk, and you wanted to be just like them. Or maybe it was an album or band that blew your mind—whether that band was the most obscure local band, or a super-famous one. And if you're anything like me, it was a combination of several factors that got you into punk, and I want to hear about all of them. I want to hear your wildest show stories. I want to hear about punk rock love, that's my favorite topic: I want to hear about that boy or girl or nonbinary babe that was your punk rock dream come true, even if the relationship was short-lived, hell, even if you never talked to them. And I want to hear about why you're still into punk: why, despite all the bullshit involved in it, there's some part of you that will always be part of it. Like Joe Strummer said: "Punk rock is like the Mafia. Once you're made, you're made." So tell me how, just when you thought you were out, they pulled you back in.

rustbeltjessie.tumblr.com

ZERODENT

Zerodent formed in Perth, Australia in early 2015 by four friends who have been playing music (sometimes in bands together) for the last ten or so years. Perth is not a huge city, but there are a lot of people who play music and a lot of them know each other and friendships sometimes lead to band memberships. Zerodent are one such band, with member who play / played in other bands.

They only played a handful of shows but were very productive behind the scenes and just over a year later after they formed they have released a debut album. And that's only due to the usual delays with vinyl pressing plants—the album was recorded in July, just five months after their first practice.

Zerodent have the punk energy, pop melodies and new wave angularity. Their guitarist Predrag Delibasich (Pex to everyone, except his mum) was kind enough to answer a few questions.

Introduction and interview by Caleb Merrey.

MRR: Pex, when you came back from Japan and formed Zerodent, were there Japanese bands that you saw who inspired you to start something new?

I was there late 2014 / early 2015 on a family trip, but during that time I didn't see any bands that inspired me to start Zerodent. I saw my all-time fave Japanese act Shibusa Shirazu Orchestra, but that's another story altogether, not relevant to this band at all.

However, I can pinpoint the exact moment I decided to start a new band: I was near the subway station in suburban Yokohama, listening to a punk playlist I compiled earlier. From memory it had a bunch of songs by the Clash, Johnny Moped, the Pagans, les Cadavres, as well as some punk bands from former Yugoslavia. It was on shuffle and the shuffle was so perfect! Song after song of pure punk bliss. It just hit me that I had to go back to these kind of roots and start a punk band when I got back to Perth. I started suggesting it to my friends who play music while I was still in Japan, as I wanted to get right into it when I got back home. It's funny, because it was the first trip to Japan back in 2004 that inspired me to start Soviet Valves as well...

MRR: What was the thing that you heard that made you want to make music?

The other music I've been listening since my early childhood and the fact that I could play guitar a little bit. Add some creative fun and a fear of mortality and you get all the good reasons to make music. However, I cannot pinpoint one thing I heard in my life that made me want to make music. I think I heard the first rock song when I was five and first punk song when I was nine and both times it was a life-changing experience. However it wasn't until I got completely hooked on the Ramones when I was fifteen or so that I realised I want to make my own music.

I grew up in Serbia and played in a couple of bands back in the day, but then the war started. I moved to Australia and it took me a while to get back in the music. It was 2001 when I started my first band here and I have been making music since then.

MRR: Is there a principal songwriter who comes up with the initial ideas or are

songs formed at rehearsal within the group?
In short: the whole band writes the songs together. The longer answer is I write most of the music and lyrics. The music comes first and it's always by mucking around on guitar. Often it produces nothing, but sometimes an idea comes up, a riff or a line and then I work more on it and see if anything happens. It usually does. Then I record it and don't listen to it for a couple of days. Then when I play it and if I still like it I take it to the band. At the band's practice I play the riff as simple as possible and let everyone do their bits. I *never* tell anyone how to play. Perhaps if we try it a few times I might suggest if we should try it some different way—be it the tempo or dynamics, but I never impose on the band how a song should be played. That is the band's duty—everyone should come up with their bits. Most of the times it sounds different than what I had in mind, but that is the beauty of being in a band.

MRR: With members from SMRTS, Leeches, Soviet Valves, and Bamodi. Zerodent's sound is quite different to those bands. How is writing for Zerodent different to coming up for parts for SMRTS?
For me writing is quite different as SMRTS songs start as a lead guitar melody ideas, while Zerodent start mostly as chords. Also, with SMRTS it is more influenced by surf and Eastern European sounds, which is not the case with Zerodent. I usually muck around on my guitar and play some chords until I hear some that sound good together. Then I keep playing it until I'm happy with it and the only thing left is to record it. This mostly happens at night when the kids are asleep, so the next day I play the recording and make a final decision if the song is a keeper or if it needs more work. Once that's done it's up to the band to make the songs work.

MRR: Zerodent's music has urgency and aggression all without the usual distorted guitar tones utilized by most guitar bands. Was there a conscious decision to use a clean guitar sound more akin to your surfy SMRTS sound as opposed to what you used in Soviet Valves?
I never used any effects in Soviet Valves. However, the guitar amp I used back then (Vadis, an Australian late '60s / early '70s beauty) had a slight warm, natural distortion in one of the inputs. Plus with the Valves I mostly used the power chords. With SMRTS I only used Ibanez Tube Scream and Analog Delay and sometimes an octaver. With Zerodent I did not want any of the effect pedals at first. But my Vadis amp is out of action for a simple reason: now I have two kids, which means two kids' seats in the back of the car that are pain in the arse to remove. So, I just cannot fit the amp in my car anymore. It still works well and I will bring it back one day. In the meantime I am playing a bit with the pedals again and will see if some of them will be used. But it is a challenge to play punkish stuff with a clean sound and I love the challenge! The whole album was recorded clean, but Will used some analog after effects to add a bit to guitar, especially for solos.

MRR: I hear elements of Wire, Gang of Four, the Saints, and Ed Kuepper in the music. Are there European bands that may have influenced the band on some level?
I'd say yes, but nothing was a conscious influence. I never sat down thinking I want this song to sound like such and such, or I want to have my guitar sounding like xxx. Apart from the UK stuff, there are not many European bands I'm familiar with, but since I was born and grew up in Serbia (former Yugoslavia), a lot of bands from that region, especially punk and new wave stuff shaped me significantly in my early teenage years.

That stuff stuck with me to this day and I can easily say Yugo punk and new wave, mainly made

between 1979 and 1983 is the music I have listened to most in my life so far. The bands like Pekinska Patka, Paraf, Pankrti, Idoli, Sarlo Akrobata, Elektricni Orgazam...all gold! It didn't really influence my playing or the sound of the band though. But then again, as I said earlier, there was no clear influence of the band. I'm always happy to hear what people say we sound like and sometimes I get really surprised.

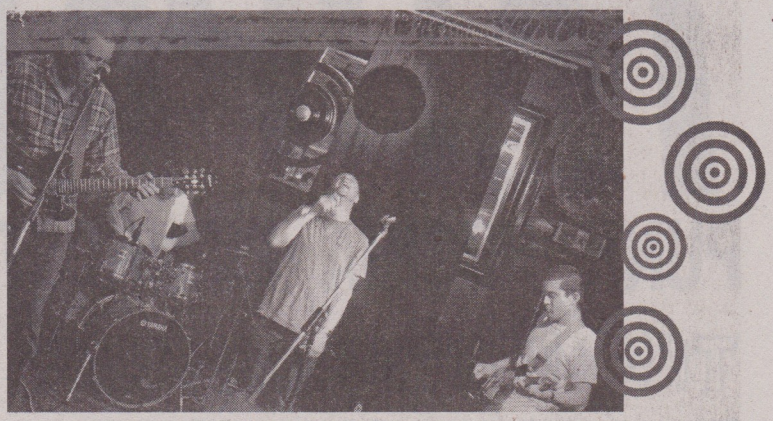
MRR: What is your process with writing lyrics?
So far it has been always the same: I listen to the song or the riff from it or play it on guitar million times until a line comes to my head. If I'm happy with that line I try to come up with a follow-up. Then build on it until I have enough lyrics for the song. Often at least 70% of the lyrics get done in one go. Other times I go back to it the next day or so and finish it off. So, I never have a topic for the song in advance. I let it develop by itself and then work on it. Then I read it and go: "Oh, so this is what this song is about!"

MRR: Gonerfest approached Zerodent to play in Memphis. How did you react to them contacting you?
We did a demo in April 2015. Basically, we had three portable recorders and one laptop microphone and just recorded five or six songs at the practice, just so we could learn the songs better. I took it home, mixed it a bit and realized, despite all the flaws, it sounded pretty good. We put it on the bandcamp and gradually, when I was bored, I sent it to various people I know online. One of them was Eric Friedl (Goner Records / Gonerfest, Oblivians, Reatards...). In July Eric send me a message asking if we would come and play Gonerfest. Of course, everyone in the band was so amazed and keen, but there was simply not enough time to get our shit together, so we asked Eric if we could do it in 2016 and it happened!

As far as Australian tour goes, we would love to do it, but will see how it goes when the album is out. We are not super keen to play often in Perth for simple reasons—there are not many decent venues to play and bands cannot get much money from it and we are too busy with our lives to play every single show we get offered, not that we get many offers though. So, we'd rather just get together, drink beer and make new music.

MRR: You recorded your first LP live to tape, will the next recordings also be done with the eight-track reel to reel or will digital recording be involved?
Yes, the album was recorded on eight-track reel-to-reel tape by Will Hooper. He recorded a couple of my other bands and he is clearly a genius with that equipment. Easy to deal with, no bullshit, no nonsense. He turned old stables at his parents' property some 20-minutes drive from Perth city into a small studio. And when I say small, it is basically just one room, so it's hard to record everything separately. We did all the music live, then added lead vocals. It took us less than six hours to drive there, set up, record and drive back home. Then I came back after two days and added some lead guitar and extra back-up vocals. Will mixed everything on the tape machine. Our friend Jon Murphy did a digital master and Jim Diamond did a vinyl master. At this stage the plan is to always record there with Will, as we are all 100% happy with it! We finally got the records the other day and I am completely satisfied with what it sounds like. My playing on the other hand...

MRR: What were the pro and cons of recording to tape as opposed to using ProTools?
I'm not sure, as I don't think I ever recorded on ProTools. But some of my older stuff was recorded digitally. The tape to me sounds more suitable for this kind of music. I'm not saying it's



better, but to me it sounds more natural and real. I guess editing / mixing on Pro Tools is easier, but Will can handle his tape machine very well and I'm sure he has more fun with it than with the computer.

MRR: How did you get the album to be released on Alien Snatch! Records?
After we recorded and mixed it in July I started sending it to some labels I like / know of. From memory I sent it to at least twenty. Some replied saying they would give it a listen and get back to me, some said they were too busy or had no money to put it out. Most never replied. Until we heard from Daníel from Alien Snatch! Records. He said immediately that he wanted to put it out. I thought he might ask us to pay for it or something, but no, he was genuine with his offer and very keen to get us on his label.

MRR: You have a new drummer, Louis Hooper. How long has Louis been in the band and how has he fit in Zerodent?
He joined in early 2016 after our original drummer Chris Cobilis decided to concentrate more on his solo projects. Louis has been our friends for years and has played in lots of cool local bands: Blow Up, Wind Waker, Water Temple and Rat Columns. I was very excited to get him in the band, but didn't realize he hadn't played drums for months prior to our first jam. He was rusty a bit, but a couple of months later he sounds like he was with us from the beginning. Great guy to hang around with too.

MRR: What's next for Zerodent in 2016?
Album is finally out, so playing more shows in Perth, going to other big cities in Australia. We already have enough songs ready for another album, so will start recording them soon and make more in the meantime.

MRR: How can people get hold of your music and is there a distribution label they can check out?
Get Hip is the distributor in the States and for the rest of the world best to check the label's website: aliensnatch.de

aliensnatch.bandcamp.com / zerodent.bandcamp.com

KUOLEMAN TAPPANEET:

PUNK ROCKIA PIENKUSTANTEILTA 1977–1983

THE DEATH KILLERS: A NEW FINNISH "KILLED BY DEATH" COMPILATION (1977–1983)

A guide to unheard and underappreciated early Finnish punk by Juho Hänninen

As you are reading this *KUOLEMAN TAPPANEET: Punk rockia pienkustanteilta 1977-1983* should be hot off the vinyl press. "KUOLEMAN TAPPANEET" translates roughly as "DEATH KILLERS" and "Punk rockia pienkustanteilta 1977-1983" as "Punk Rock from Private Releases 1977-1983." It all translates also as a Finnish *Killed By Death*-style compilation with the nastiest cuts from the underworld of the first wave of Finnish punk rock. Find yours from the local Svart Records distributor.

This is the first time the bands and their usually one off 7" inch records have been compiled. Most of the bands on the new compilation lived for two or three years and then went into exile forever. Some bands formed the basis for dirty deeds later on though.

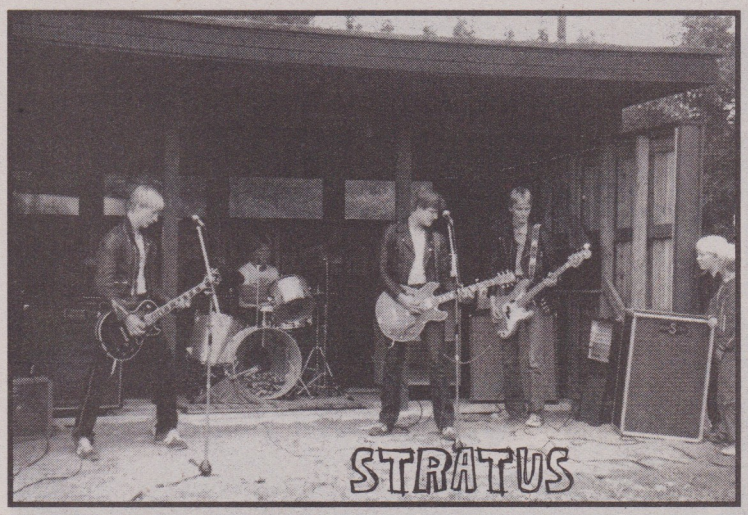
But let me start with a few general words about Finnish punk rock before continuing to the bands on the compilation. If you are altogether unfamiliar with Finnish punk here's the surface three: PELLE MILJOONA, EPPU NORMAALI, and RATSIA. All solid '77 punk rock. MAUKKA PERUSJÄTKÄ was also huge with the song "SÄPINÄÄ" ("Bustle"). These bands all sung in Finnish and formed a recognizable sound from (mostly) British influences with plenty of the RAMONES in there too. They also represent the polarization of the Finnish scene into Helsinki (PELLE MILJOONA), Tampere (EPPU NORMAALI), and the rural bands spreading to small towns everywhere—the hometown of RATSIA had fewer than 4000 inhabitants in the 1970s.

The commonly acknowledged first Finnish punk rock single is BRIARD's "I Really Hate Ya" from 1977. But even before that there was frantic movement diving straight from mid-air to crash on the landing strip. The nasty rock'n'rollers HURRIGANES started in 1971 and were a coltish breath of air to the 1970s scene but not really enough to constitute the "proto-punk" label. They must not be ignored in this context though! VIRTANEN, with roots in late 1973, definitely merits the label. An inspiration to Finnish punks, they were covered by the PELLE MILJOONA-led band 1978 on the first Finnish punk compilation Pohjalla ("At the Bottom"). Coinciding with the emergence of punk rock, the humor rock band SLEEPY SLEEPERS had their fun with crazy hair, alpine glasses as sunglasses, and leather jackets with torn-up jeans. The influence of their attitude to those susceptible cannot be ignored.

In many ways there was never a definitive Finnish punk rock record label. Poko Records, started by the record store owner Epe Helenius in 1977, comes closest. But even the Poko catalogue always included rock and new wave, which in Finland was an elastic concept including pretty much everything from experimental pieces to reggae. Other significant labels are Love Records and its offspring Johanna Kustannus ("Johanna Publishing"). Started in 1979 after the bankruptcy of Love, Johanna continued to publish some of the finest of Finnish punk.

There were numerous smaller record labels, some more independent-minded than the ones mentioned above. There were also bands in the dozens and fanzines in the hundreds and of course the big divide into the more mellow new wave and the exceptionally violent form of hardcore with bands likes TERVEET KÄDET ("Healthy Hands"), KAAOS ("Chaos"), RIISTETYT ("the Deprived"), LAMA ("Economic Depression"), and RATTUS paving the wave for a boisterous decade to come. Don't forget the post-punks either! Start with MUSTA PARAATI ("Black Parade")…

But anyhow, let's get back to the underworld of the Finnish scene introduced by *KUOLEMAN TAPPANEET*. Except for KOLLAA KESTÄÄ none of the bands on the compilation made it to the record labels mentioned above. Some wanted to, others didn't. The records and the two songs picked from cassettes were made with a "Do It Yourself" mentality with affiliated aesthetics: crisp in sound, rough in distortion, passionate in attitude. The bands' do it yourself mentality and their necessity to get something cherished to do—whether in a small rural town or in the university city of Tampere—is why the compilation is designated with the meaning DEATH KILLERS. These bands are the offspring of killing apathy.



STRATUS – "Valhetta Vain" / STRATUS – "Only Lies" (1980)
A straight-up Ramones-influenced song from Pirkkala. The band lasted for a short while before it was time for the guitarist and singer-songwriter Kari Kääriäinen to try his guitar playing heels in the '77-esque KARANTEENI.

NEUROOSI / DOLOREX – "Rock Against Seija Isonsaari" (1980)
Living only for a year before the more capable members of the band shifted towards heavy metal NEUROOSI changed their name to the pharmaceutical drug DOLOREX in protest of too many punk bands adapting the name of a disease. The song is about a local youth worker who, after a minor conflict, forced the boys to leave their practice room at once with enforcement from the police. The boys complied. They had to carry the bass drum out with special care as there was a special branch of homemade wine made of sugar, yeast, and water called "kilju" brewing inside.

TRAGEDIA — "Teeskentelijä" / TRAGEDY – "Pretender" (1983)
Maybe more rock than punk, TRAGEDIA is faithful to its hometown's more melodic sound. The band played the first-ever Puntala festival in 1982. Puntala is the longest running festival dedicated to punk and hardcore in Finland. Though there were a few dead years, Puntala is still organized to this day. The band also made tours in which they packed themselves and their gear into a van and headed off to find bars and dance halls to play at. The song is about breaking free from the pseudo-reality created by posers.

SUURKAUPUNGIN HAITAT – "Elviksen Kitara" / THE HARMS OF A METROPOLIS – "The Guitar of Elvis" (1978/9)
Another unreleased piece! The band started out as PORNO but transformed to a more socially acceptable form after their first gig. The song was recorded for a compilation cassette of local bands but never came out. The song is about teddy boys and the chorus goes "the guitar of Elvis is not in tune, the guitar of Elvis is not in tune…" Punks versus teddy boys was big phenomenon in the first wave of Finnish punk rock—violence even erupted when opposing groups of youngsters encountered each other.

TIPI & MINISTERIT – "ATK" / SYLVESTER & THE MINISTERS – "ADP" (1980)
Formed by the fanzine-ster and comic book artist Sir Jyce Laine, the band started from the ashes of a longer project called PROTEESI ("Prosthesis"). The song on the compilation is about computers taking over the human existence in forms of registers and file systems. The ingeniously catchy song was written by a guy who sang with the band for a moment but was dismissed by Sir Jyce because he thought the guy is too much of a hippie. Later on TIPI & MINISTERIT and PROTEESI songs formed the starting point of no other than one of the meanest bands in the Finnish scene in the 1980s, MAHO NEITSYT. Led by a local scene hang around Pexi, they started their musical career covering songs from the bands mentioned above.

SOS – "Kurjat" / SOS – "Despicables" (1980)
Now seeing the light of the day for the first time, "Kurjat" was meant to be the original B-side of the band's debut single. SOS made a follow-up single on Kräk! a rock-oriented sub-label of a Finnish major record label called Finnlevyt. SOS was also included on the compilation Asfalttidisco ("Asphalt Discotheque"). All happening this happened in the same year and they soon faded out.

NAUTA – "Mä Meen" / BOVINE – "I'll Go" (1979)
Another televised act! The band was formed on the basis of HALFROUND, a rock act who played regular cover gigs about 100 kilometers from their hometown. More career oriented, the band also had songs on compilation albums: 3 Vuotta Myöhemmin ("3 Years Later"), a follow-up to Love Records Pohjalla, and on Aasfalttidisco. The band dismantled soon after 1980 and some members of NAUTA went on to form a blues based hard rock band called MAAGIE RACK. The record "Mä Meen" is from also included the songs "Onko Suomi Vapaa Maa?" ("Is Finland a Free Country?") and "Älä Ota Kesäkissaa" ("Treat Your Pussycat Right").

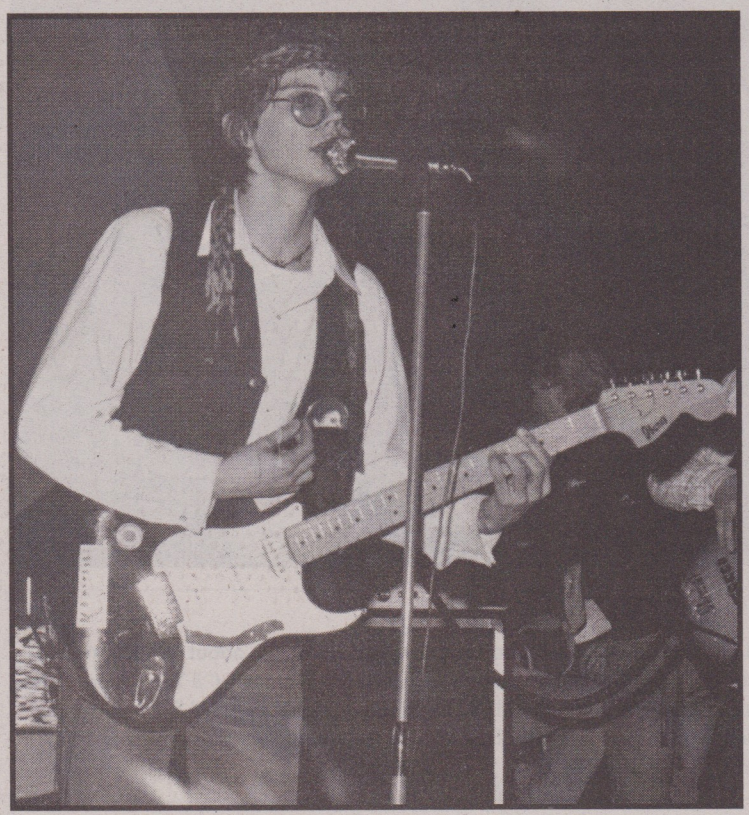
T. TORNI BAND – "Rauhaa Ja Rakkautta" / T. TOWER BAND – "Peace and Love" (1981)
A rare synth-punk rocker! With its message of love and peace the theme of the song is very rare too. The band was preceded by a '70s rock band with hard rock influences called TAIFUN. The other side of the T. TORNI BAND single is a mellow love song—very poppish, with some new wave influences too. The band also had a song called "Eläköön, Eläköön Neutronipommi" ("Long Live the Neutron Bomb"). All songs were written by the band's friend, who was absent from the recording session because of excessive drunkenness. Punk ain't hippies?!

BLÄÄH – "Punkfilosofiaa" / BLAAH – "Punk Philosophy" (1982)
Released on a compilation cassette put together by the maker of Kaaos fanzine ("Chaos") the song is as Killed by Death as it gets. The other Blääh song on the compilation was a mockery of a traditional Finnish children's' song about going to the zoo tomorrow in the form of going to the mental hospital tomorrow. The guy who plays organ on the TRAGEDIA record is guilty here too!

BRUPS – "Ramptoniin" / BRUPS – "To Rampton" (1980/1)
Opening the B-side is BRUPS, named after the sound of a fart. The suburban teenagers were not all humor though. The song itself is about the English mental institute, which treated its patients as inmates and as inhumanely as one can imagine. BRUPS made also a television appearance on one of the three Finnish TV channels. They played their single: "Ramptoniin" and "Tähtiä" ("Stars"), a Finnish version of "Tin Soldier" (Stiff Little Fingers), and a made-up song in Swedish about loving the BRUPS!

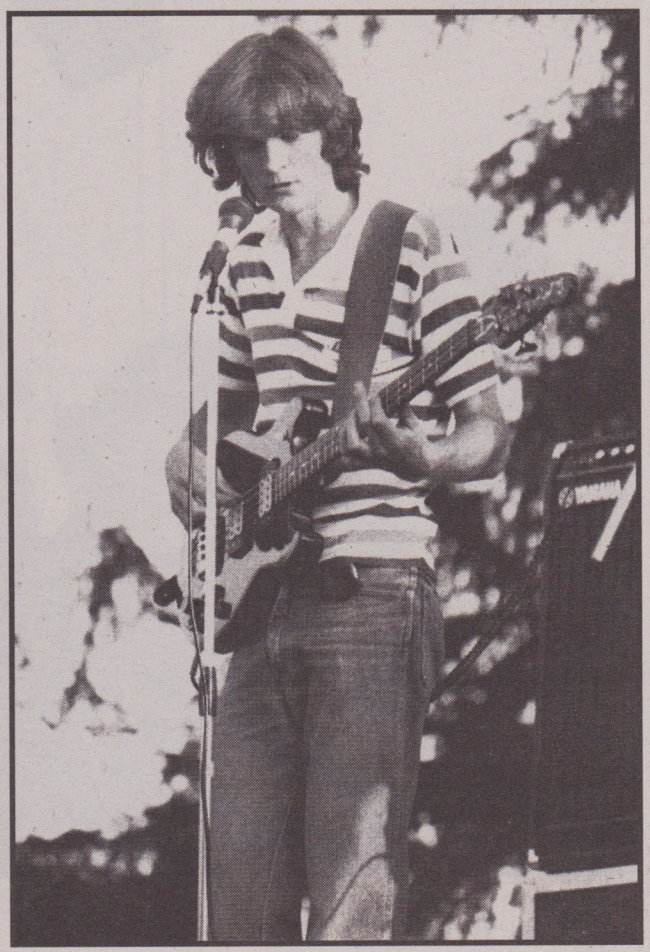
TUHTIKYMPPI – "Raapimalla Rahaa" / TUHTIKYMPPI – "Scratching for Money" (1982)
A split single paid by the local musicians' association. The B-side was the only other rock band in town HERTS ("a Hertz"), who play a ballad on the record. The drummer of TUHTIKYMPPI was twelve years old when recording the single. The oldest member was twenty-two. The song itself is about scratching lottery tickets, which were a novelty in town. After TUHTIKYMPPI (which is the name of a model of car trailer) came another rock act, who covered their material.

KASVAIN



KASVAIN – "Onko Suomi Usattunut?" / TUMOR – "Is Finland Americanized?" (1979)
Recorded in the training room of a vocational school, this song is about the youth and the glamorizing relationship with the United States. In many ways, it's about the same phenomenon as the song by SUURKAUPUNGIN HAITAT. KASVAIN transformed later into a band in the vein of the JAM called KUVAT ("Pictures") and released a 7".

TUHTIKYMPPI



KOLLAA KESTÄÄ – "Ahvenanmaa Takaisin Ruotsille" / "KOLLAA WITHSTANDS – "Åland Back To Sweden" (1977)
The last song on the album is a real treat for Finnish punk fans: An unreleased recording from the practices of KOLLAA KESTÄÄ. This was before the band made their first 7". The song is about giving the islands of Åland in the sea between Finland and Sweden back to Sweden. The song itself is an adaptation from the SLEEPY SLEEPERS's hit song "Anarkiaa Karjalassa" ("Anarchy in the Karelia"). The drummer put the song on sample cassette of one of the first Finnish DIY-recorders Best of Catlantic Records Vol. 1-23. The playful "label" made numerous tapes from late 1973 to early 1975. As far as I know they had only one contemporary, the Bloody Cunt label run by Kari Kosmos.

Most of these songs don't exist in any form online! Look for the new record, out on Svart, to hear them (or stay tuned to an upcoming episode of *Maximum Rocknroll* radio!). Do you have obscurities you wanna tell the world about? Write us and we'll make it happen: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

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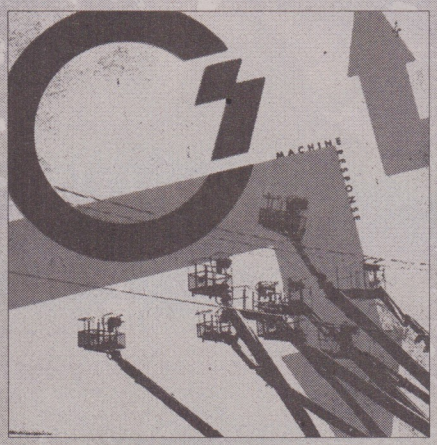

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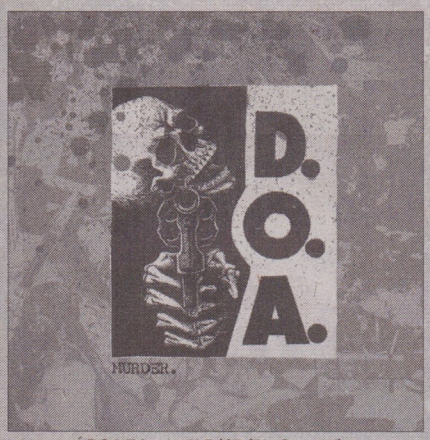

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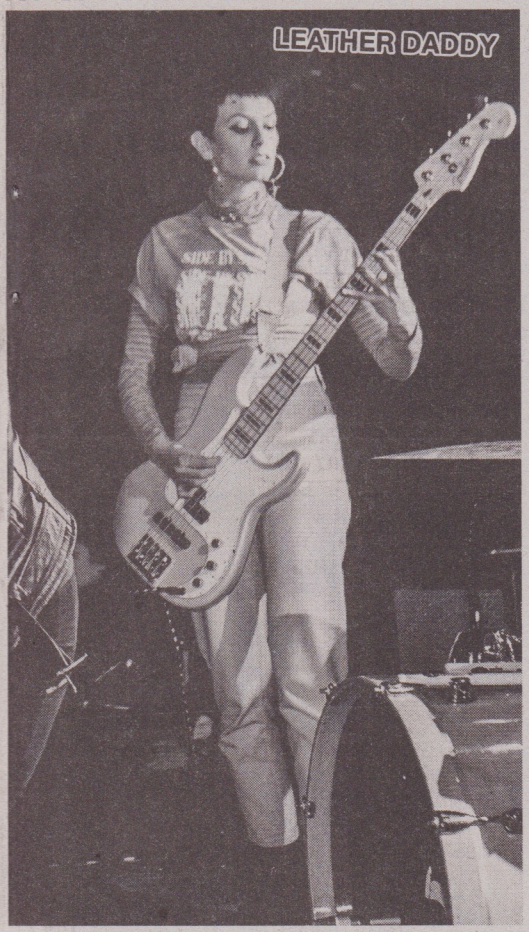

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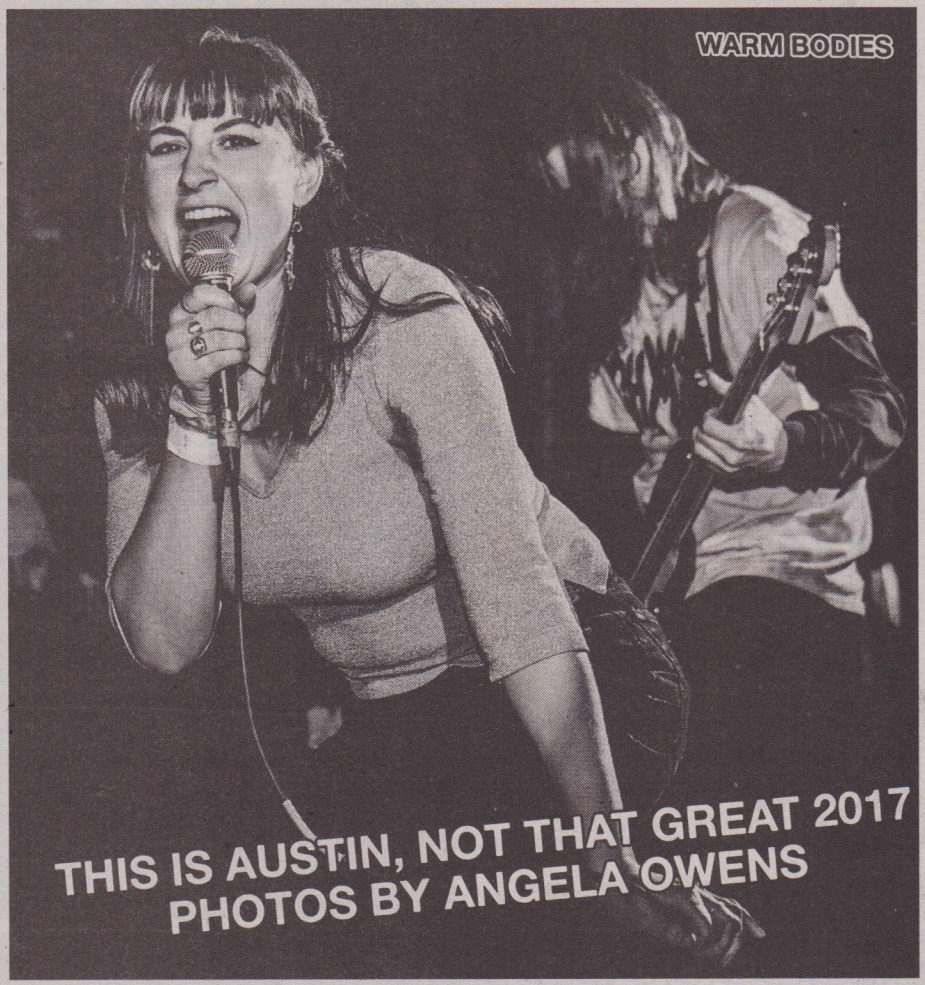

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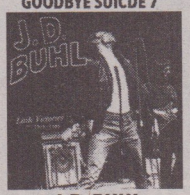

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PELUQUERÍA CANINA

Peluquería Canina is a band from Madrid that spits out a restless, undistorted punk in debt to ancient sounds but with an original touch, something really missing nowadays when everything seems to be invented and bands just try to copy preexisting formats. Its members have played in a bunch of bands before and are well-knowns of the European garage punk scene. Their debut was a 7" EP for the Spanish label Blondes Must Die Records, and now their first LP Jóvenes Promesas *has just been released by Going Underground.*

Photos provided by the band.

MRR: Tell us something about how you put the band together. Who are you, what bands do you come from, and what do you play?

Carmelo: Well, I've known Riki and Angelito for a long time. I met Angelito because he used to DJ at Freaks (a very well-known bar in Madrid that doesn't exist anymore) and I asked him every night to play songs by the Oblivians. I met Riki in another bar in Madrid, Nasty (which has disappeared too). Once we came across each other in a party—he was wearing a Dead Boys tee and we started to talk. I met Manu a bit later, I know he used to kind of hate me because I was always messing around. *[laughs]* Each of us played in different garage punk bands, and we had some gigs together. One day we all got together in Madrid and finally formed the band.

I have played with Los Human Tornado, Tropicalianegra and I am still playing with Hollywood Sinners. I play drums in Peluquería Canina.

Ángel: I play the bass in Peluquería Canina. I have played in Mano de Mono, Sierra Leona, and Juanita y Los Feos. Currently I also sing and play the bass in Las Venas.

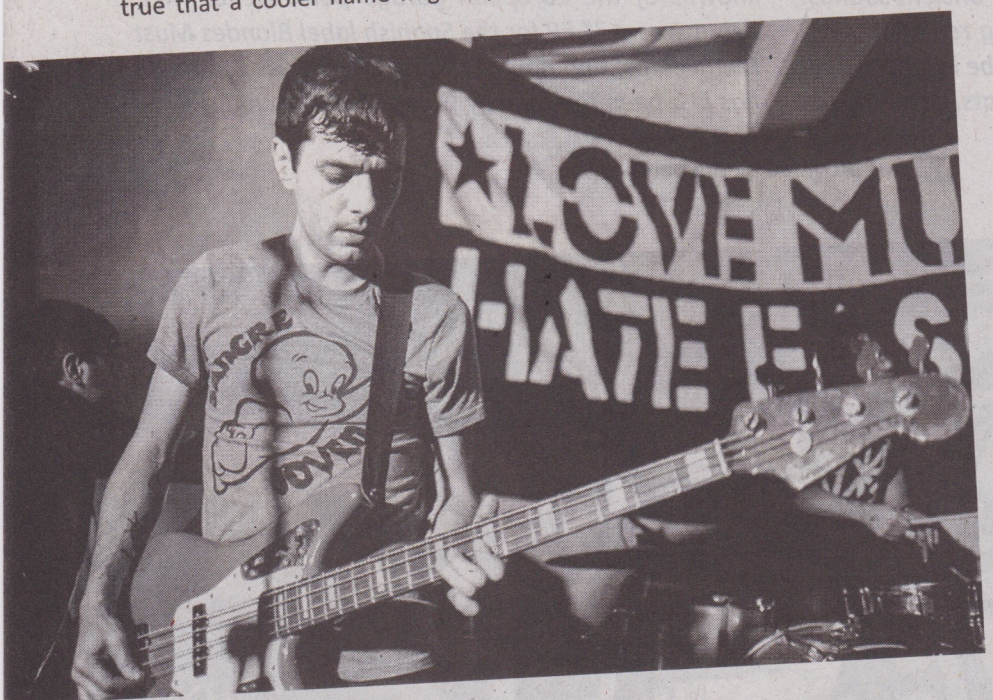
Manu: I used to play in the Phantom Keys, Born Losers, and Holy Family. Now I play guitar in Peluquería Canina.

Riki: ?¿?¿?¿?¿

COLUMNS

MRR: Why such an absurd name as Peluquería Canina (Dog Grooming Salon)? Are you a joke band? Why haven't you chosen a cooler name, something more serious, like Antiguo Regimen or Ciudad Lineal?

Riki: Well, I came up with the name. At the beginning I thought it was funny and I just said it. Ángel and Manu liked it, Carmelo was more reluctant...Finally I was the one who liked it less, but anyway, it just stayed. It's true that a cooler name might open some extra doors within the punk elite...a bit stupid to me, though. By the way, I like those two bands quite a lot, and there are very good people in both of them.



Ángel: Peluquería Canina never got on well with fashion. We feel closer to and more comfortable with band names like Angry Samoans or the Queers. It doesn't mean that our band is a joke—in fact we take it quite seriously.

Carmelo: The truth is that I was not around when the name came up. We are not a joke band, but we have been friends for a long time and we all love good laughs. I had some other names such as Cagofuego or Un6yun4, but these gentlemen didn't approve. Regarding cooler, post-punk names? I don't give a shit.

MRR: In Madrid and many other cities punk is a bit dead in the sense that the scene lacks a generational replacement. At the end of the day, the members of the newly formed bands are the same people who have been around in the scene for ten or twenty years playing with other bands. Is the title of your record *Jóvenes Promesas* related to that issue? I mean, none of you are very young anymore, and all of you come from other bands, some of which originated in the '90s...

Carmelo: That's right, we are always the same people, there is no one coming behind, or maybe we just haven't noticed...The name is kind of joke about ourselves, about what we could (or thought we could) have been but never happened.

Ángel: In my opinion the album title is quite sad and melancholic. That's something you can feel in almost every song.

Riki: It also brings me back to my childhood, the first love and friendship promises, the idea that they would be forever.

MRR: Although some pioneering '70s bands started to play guitar without distortion, most bands have followed the fathers of the movement, namely Ramones and Sex Pistols, using distortion and considering it a fundamental element, for example GBH. However, lately more and more punk bands prefer clean guitars, rescuing certain retro flavors, which to me is much more punk and helps with unmasking all those punk-wannabes that actually play hard rock or heavy metal. Is it a trend within punk? Why did you decide to play without distortion?

Manu: I don't try to follow any trend or say that a particular sound is better. I used to play in '60s-style bands and I am more influenced by that sound with clean and sharp guitars than by the typical distorted punk sound. I think a high treble and compressed guitar sounds more aggressive, and I really like the results of mixing this sound with the tape echo.

Ángel: From the Kinks or Los Saicos to the Cramps or Joy Division it has been proven that distortion is not necessary to play punk. But I don't see it as a "clean versus distortion" competition, we didn't choose it deliberately.

Carmelo: That was how it came out, it sounded great and we went forward with it, just that, without thinking whether that's what bands do or not. As you know, some of us play or have played in garage punk bands and we are quite used to the kind of sound you find in *Back From the Grave, Nuggets,* etc.

Riki: Actually what drove us to play like that was having a guitar player with a very defined style. I think the echoed sound that Manu gets from his guitar is one of the best I've heard, and not taking advantage of that would be really stupid and would take away that personal sound we have. That said, I also love distortion, no doubt.

MRR: Another thing that needs to be mentioned after listening to your songs is the high-pitched, childish, cocky voice of your singer, in line with other Spanish bands such as Larsen, Siniestro Total or TNT, Iberian heirs of Johnny Rotten, Jello Biafra and other classics with grotesque voices. As with the distortion issue, I think many bands believe that the most important thing in punk is to be noisy and guttural, using the kind of voice that will fuck up your throat. I think it is more punk not to sing 'til your throat bleeds out, but rather sing like an upset, teasing cartoon. What do you think? Which bands have been your influence in this sense?

Ángel: Well, it's not something that you choose, at least in our case. We are four mates, every one of us played an instrument before except Riki, so Riki had to sing and sing his way, which happened to be that way. He is not imitating a voice, that's his voice. Personally I like a lot the bands that you have mentioned but come on, Circle Jerks or Dead Boys had a very low voice and nobody can say they were less punk. There is something curious about these kind of bands with high-pitched singers: you either love them or hate them.

Riki: That's right, as Ángel said: four buddies, three play an instrument, one doesn't...They had no choice, and my voice is what it is. In fact, when I try to modulate it or do something different the results are (almost) never convincing...Of course Larsen, Siniestro, and TNT are great and I have listened to their songs for years, so I guess they became a reference for me and my voice whether I wanted or not.

MRR: Can you talk a little bit about your influences? I catch some Iberian flavors (KGB, TNT) mixed with guitar sounds that bring us to more melancholic bands such as Observers, Red Dons or the Vicious. Kind of the same style I listen to in Generacion Suicida, a band which I know you like quite a lot. Because they also sing in Spanish, the similarities with you are evident.

Ángel: It's a weird mix. Obviously we like a million bands and different music styles that in one way or another have influenced Peluquería Canina, but I'll try to be concise. Riki and me have a past marked by Spanish '80s punk. Carmelo is more into the garage punk, kinda like Reatards or the Spits. But the curious case is Manu. He was playing in instro-surf or rhythm'n'blues '60s bands, kinda like Pretty Things or the earliest Rolling Stones. When we started to practice together he had the same gear, a Fender Twin Reverb and his magic tape echo but we were playing punk now. In my opinion we have invented nothing but if we have something original in our sound it would be that mix.

I remember once in our practice room when we were writing "Sangre Joven," the first song of our album. I played the intro and verse bass lines and Manu didn't know what to play when Riki started to sing. Then he told me something like "I don't know what to play on that part so I think I'm going to play rhythm'n'blues." And that was perfect.

Riki: It is true that when I write the lyrics and sing I tend to go towards the melancholic style of the bands you mention. The Iberian punk influence is obvious, and I like that to be obvious, but when we started we didn't have a predefined style—actually we had no fucking clue of what would come out from the first rehearsals. I love '80s punk because it was my first contact with music and influenced me in every way. I guess you can see that in our songs.

MRR: When foreign media review Spanish punk bands, I find it funny that they often compare them to Eskorbuto, I guess just because they all sing in Spanish. Usually those reviews are not very accurate because probably who writes them hasn't listened to Interterror or Familia Real, which in many cases may be a much better comparison. Sometimes people compare your band with other bands that you don't even know or that have nothing to do with you. Now that your LP is out on a US label I guess you've had a bunch of that sort of reviews. Tell us about the most surprising ones.

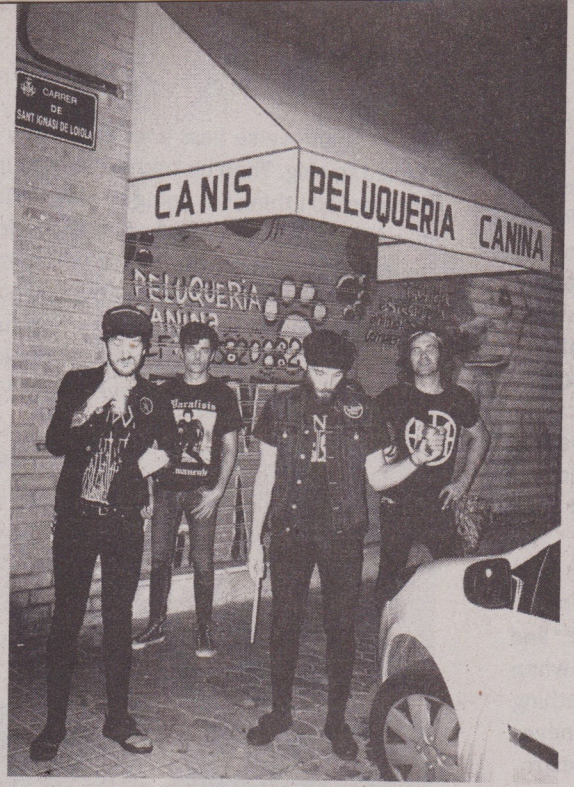
Ángel: We have been compared to Agent Orange, the Cramps, Escroto de Rata, Red Kross, Larsen, Vicious, Wipers, Eastlink, Dead Kennedys, Bauhaus, Generacion Suicida, 45 Grave, Kortatu (WTF??!!), Los Monjo, KGB, or Masshysteri. Almost all of them are fucking awesome bands but I think we are not even close to more than half of them. The comparisons are totally subjective, so it's understandable that you can be compared with whoever they want. However, I can't accept this: "*female*-fronted Spanish-language melodic punk." Female? *[laughs]* Maybe we got a problem here.

Riki: Reviews are really awkward, I also find it funny that thing about my female voice...some reviews are totally nonsense, some others boost my ego. Man, we are being compared to bands that I have devotion for, and that makes me feel good even if I know we have nothing to do with them. *[laughs]* Sometimes people compare us with bands that we don't know, and after listening to them we still don't get the point. But anyway, everyone is free to understand music as they please.

Carmelo: Actually I haven't read that many reviews...The strangest I remember is one saying that we play "surfipunk."

MRR: How did you get in touch with Going Underground? Why did the record take so long to be released? Did you ever think that it would never come out?
Carmelo: Angel contacted several labels, and they were the first to say yes. Other labels liked it, but either they had a long queue of albums to be released or told us that they don't put out non-English records.
Ángel: It seems that Ron from Going Underground had a problem with the vinyl factory which delayed the album's release for eight months. We've had a lot of thoughts, but the record is finally here.

MRR: People are getting more and more open to music with lyrics in other languages, but the truth is that English is the official language of punk and rock'n'roll, and it is tough to get international impact if you sing in Spanish, French, or Swedish. What do you think about this?
Riki: I really like bands that use their native language. For example, I've always liked punk bands from Eastern and Northern Europe, and French Oi! punk bands. When I started listening to foreign punk bands I had no fucking idea what they were saying, but that has never been an obstacle for me to enjoy them. The same happens with Asian bands, or from wherever. A different story is how to sing in my band. To me, the way you write and express your lyrics is important, and unless you are really good with it (which is not my case) I find it very hard to express your feelings in other languages.
Ángel: I think there have always been bands singing in their native languages with reasonable international impact. I mean, I'd need to know the meaning of "international impact"—Turbonegro singing in English or Gorila Angreb in Danish? Both of them had impact but in a different way. I think we are living in a time in which it's totally accepted and assumed. Personally I don't care in which language they sing, but I like to understand the lyrics though. Indeed, I'm very big fan of Masshysteri, Rixe, and Schizophrenia and I have no fucking idea what they are saying. For me that's not a problem. I've always thought that somehow it's a bit ridiculous to sing in a language that is not yours.



MRR: Tell us about your favorite current bands.
Riki: Hard to summarize in a list, but I really like Iberic bands. For example, bands from Barcelona such as Anarquía Verical, Ultra, Nueva Fuerza, XM2 and that kind of hardcore stuff. I still like La URSS, Tensión, NAD...I never get tired of Sudor (killer gigs!), at home I can't stop listening to Surf Nazis Must Die (just one EP released) and Lumpy and the Dumpers. I also like bands such as Secta, Mujercitos, Los Monjo, etc. but I also listen to lots of other kinds of bands that use synths and pop melodies in the vein of CC Dust... The list would be endless.
Carmelo: The truth is that I find it difficult to come across new things that really blow my mind, but I've been surprised by bands such as S.H.I.T., Warthog or Achtungs, also in Going Underground. I also listen to Ausmuteants, Santigold, Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Uber, and N.A.D.
Ángel: Wow...the list would be really endless. I will say that the best current band in the planet Earth is Überkrøppling.

MRR: US tour: when?
Riki: If all of us agree on something and our fucking slave jobs give us the chance, maybe next year. For me it would be a dream, and these three guys are the best possible people to go with.
Carmelo: Hopefully next year.
Ángel: The best possible scenario would be to record a new single, to put it out next year with a US label and go on tour after that.

MRR: Now Ángel, your bass player, lives in Copenhagen, while the rest of you are in Madrid. What is the future of the band? Where do you see yourselves in two years?
Ángel: Even with me living in Copenhagen we have kept playing. It is not so hard, you just need to know that part of the money from gigs should pay my plane tickets. I fly wherever it's necessary. It's much more complicated to write new songs but we want to continue, so we are going to do it.

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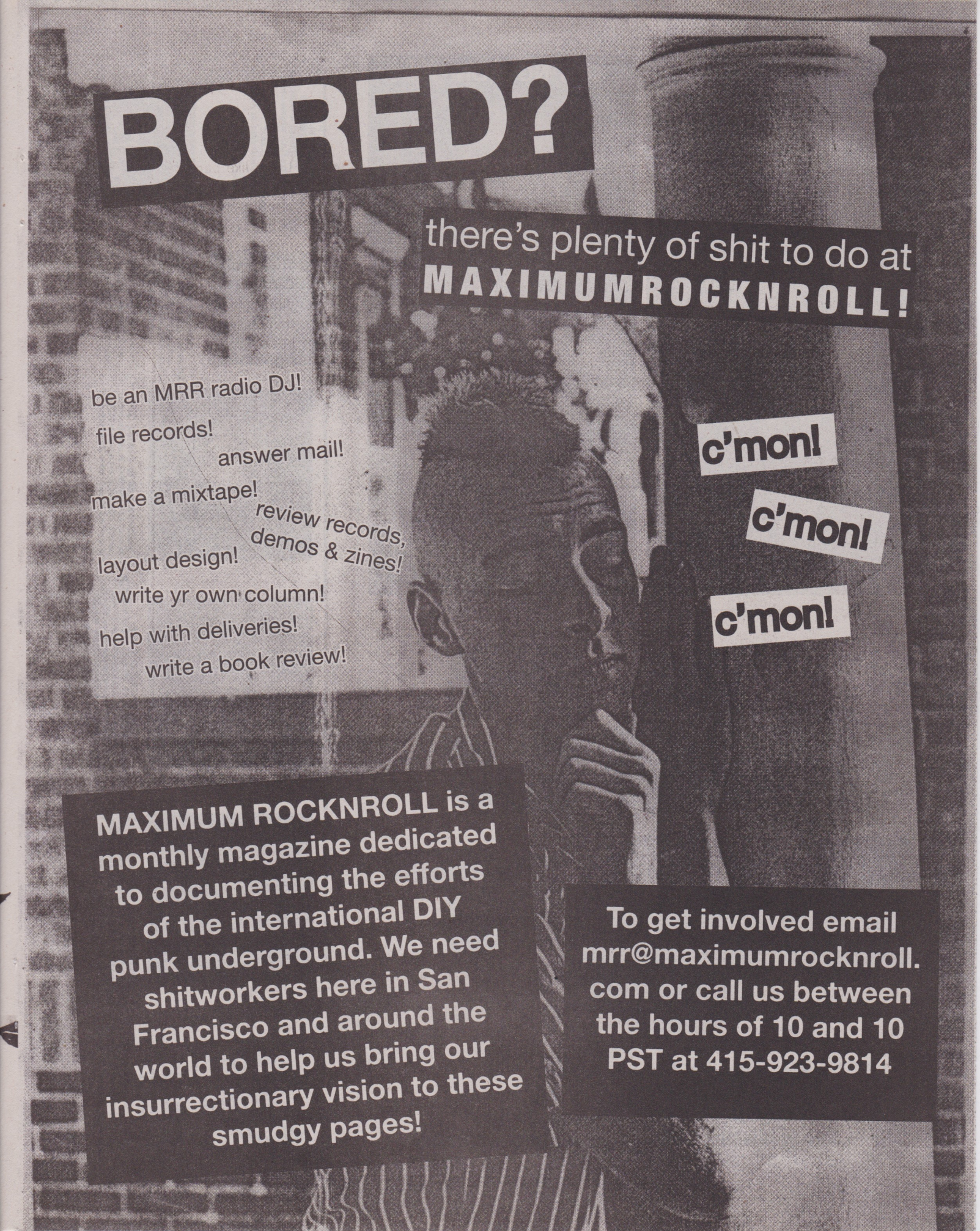
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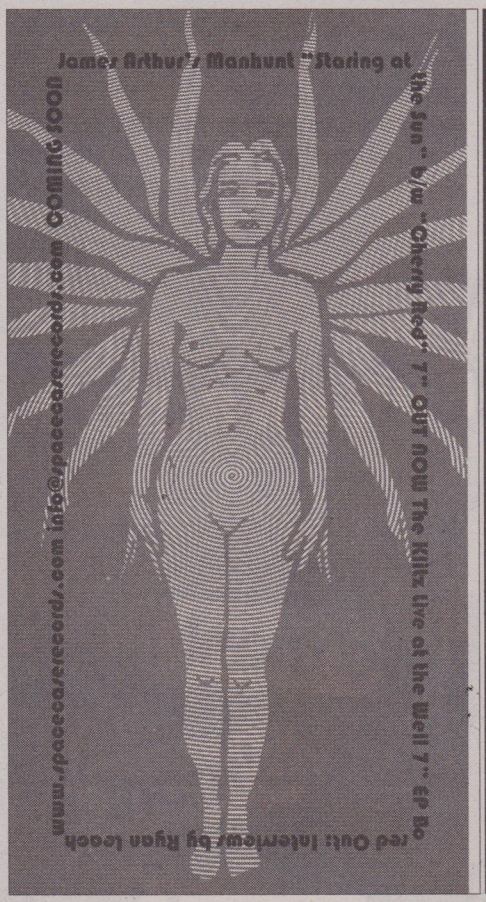

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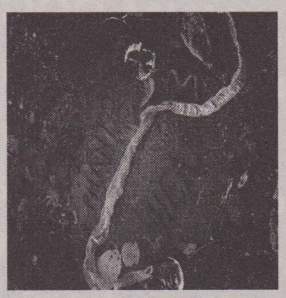

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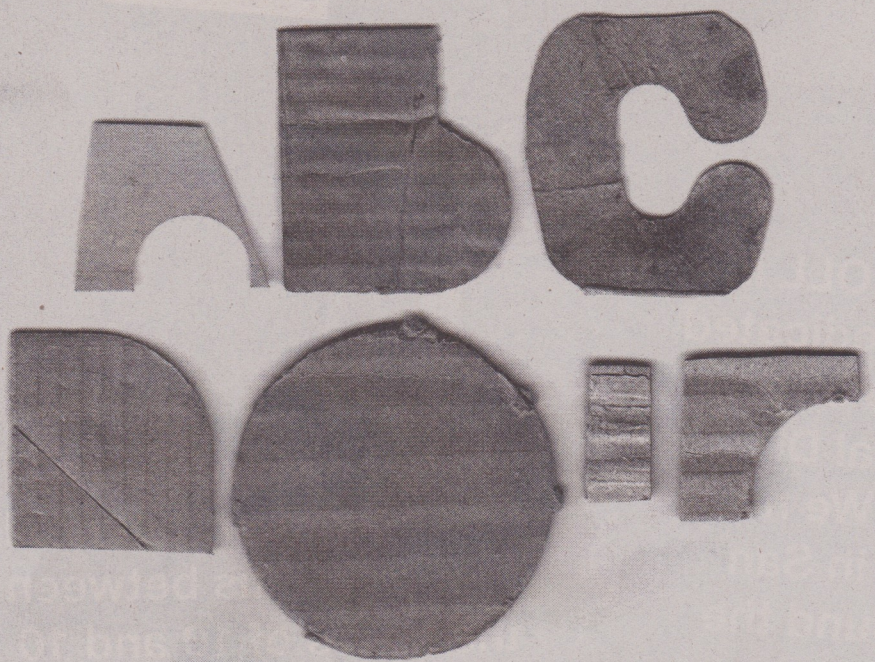

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Palberta is all joyful noise, hypnotic groove, chanted mantras, clattering drums, nonsense that makes perfect sense. They have a new album out this month and are probably coming to a city near you to play songs from it. Go and bear witness.

PALBERTA

Interview by Jazz Adam. Photos provided by Walter Wlodarczyk.

MRR: What does the word Palberta mean?

Anina: Well, when we started the band three Augusts ago, we were trying to come up with a name. Someone's dad was named Albert. Then we feminized it a little, made it Alberta. My girl...my pal... my pal Albert...Palberta. I like the name because I really like the pal in it. It has a lot of friendship in the name to me, like a female friendship. Some sort of female friendship exists in there.

Nina: It was a temporary name at first. For our first shows, we were listed as Alberta. Then Palberta. We said it was gonna change but it never changed. We're bringing in the whimsy.

Anina: We're heavy whimsical, not light whimsy.

Nina: We're your worst nightmare.

MRR: How do you write songs? Is there a primary songwriter or do you all write your songs together?
Nina: We'll just improvise and someone will start a riff. Everyone adds on. We've never had a time where it was premeditated.
Anina: Ideas will come in but, pretty much, we all write together.

MRR: Do you improvise within the recording process?
Anina: Definitely. Our new album (*Bye Bye Berta*) definitely has a lot of improvised moments.

Nina: We have a lot of outros where we improvise the song out to the end.
Anina: We've only recorded with two people. Paco Cathart and Zach Phillips. I love recording with Paco. He just knows us so well and it's so comfortable to record with him. Zach was also amazing.
Nina: We've recorded so many albums at this point and it's all been Paco. He grew as an engineer while we grew as musicians, which is nice.

MRR: How long does it generally take you to track your full albums?
Anina: Three days.
Nina: We don't take a lot of breaks. We go so in until we can't really anymore.

MRR: Do you prefer recording to playing live?
Anina: Definitely gotta be playing live, cuz, on our end, there's a lot of intended interaction and communication with the audience. Playing live is very important for the recording process, and vice versa. Recording informs our live, and live informs our recording.
Nina: A lot of the improvisation is formed and grows through the live performance. Also, our music involves a lot of choreography, and we actually do incorporate that into recording sometimes. Like we'll leave space in a song where we'll do a little jiggle.

MRR: How many times have you toured the USA?
Nina: Three long tours, and so many five-day tours.
Anina: And two week tours.
Nina: When we went on our seven-week tour, I loved going to the South. I grew up in New York my whole life so it felt like this other planet. It was really fun. I loved going to New Orleans and Savannah and Atlanta and Athens and Memphis and Nashville.
Anina: Canada was sick. I don't know, every place is such a unique experience.

MRR: What are you listening to right now?
Nina: I've been listening to *On The Beach* by Neil Young on repeat. That album is so amazing. I've also been listening to a lot of Patsy Cline and I'm always listening to Cocteau Twins.
Anina: I've been listening to a lot of Kendrick Lamar. I've been listening to a lot of Andrea Schiavelli's music.
Lily: Just Andrea Schiavelli. And nothing else really.
Nina: I've been listening to a lot of Paco's music lately.
Anina: Check out Old Table!

MRR: Which album was the most fun to record?
Anina: *Bye Bye Berta*.
Nina: I had a lot fun recording our first album *My Pal Berta*.
Anina: We ate so many bags of chips.

MRR: Many Palberta songs are lyrically interpretable. What are some themes that tend to come up in Palberta songs?
Nina: Some of our songs are about how we personally relate to and fit into larger social settings, or are subtle criticisms of them. Some are love songs for the honeys and babies. Some are more free form, with word-play or funny rhymes. Sometimes we all sing different things at once, in which case we each write our own lyrics and maybe shape them to work with each other's. But we also like to sing the

same words with different harmonies...and joke around.
Anina: A lot of jokes. A lot of food. And then real feelings within that. Humor seems to highlight a lot more than just the joke.
Lily: Because we write our individual parts during practice where we usually have no microphones, we often find out what the others are singing about later. Somehow, the separate parts within the songs always seem to thematically link. A lot of the time we are just absurdly rhyming and chanting about food and other times, for instance in "She Feels That Way" (a song on *Bye Bye Berta*), we are saying something that is serious and true. Mostly it is somewhere in between those two modes.

MRR: Since you write your songs collaboratively, how does your band dynamic inform the emotional content of your music?
Nina: We're all nuts. Lots of yelling over each other and nonstop talking in general, eating, laughing, we make up a lot of jingles. We talk in weird accents and take on characters that only exist when the three of us are together. Which definitely translates through our music. People often say that when they watch us perform, they feel they're being clued in on our inside joke...I think that there's truth in that.
Anina: Manic. The three of us together, totally manic. Loud, hysterical. It's very fun. At points overwhelming. But a lot is felt. My emotions are on full blast when I'm with Lily and Nina. But I also feel incredibly comfortable in that ability to be unhinged. These two people who know me to such degrees. It's a whole other language when the three of us are chilling and the music resonates from that.
Lily: We write together in exactly the same way as we hangout together. We interrupt each other, then apologize a minute later and hear each other out. There is a lot of yelling and complaints of feeling sick from eating too much. We feel comfortable and annoyed and excited all at once.

MRR: Does your friendship inform the live performance? Has the live performance changed as your friendship has grown?
Nina: We improvise a lot when we perform, which reflects how comfortable we are with each other, and trusting of each other's musical decisions. I think we all feel that live performance lends itself to so many possibilities and different ways to interact with the audience, other than standing and playing our instruments. But sometimes we just like to stand and play our instruments.
Anina: As Nina says, it varies. Lately I just wanna play the music and only focus on that. Sometimes, I feel more engaged with the audience. Seems like it's that way for the three of us.
Lily: We became a band before we even really knew each other and we would plan out these choreographed skits and transitions. Now, I feel like our performance is much more natural. Sometimes we will plan out a vague outline of a performance but mostly we just play off of each other and comfortably improvise.

MRR: The world of rock music is largely dominated by men. What advice would you give to other female musicians who may be struggling with that dynamic?
Nina: It's hard to perform on a bill as the only band with female members, or perform for a mostly-male audience, without feeling hyper-conscious of your female body. And that can be a really isolating thing—being made to feel aware and conscious of your body when you don't want to be. It usually makes me feel introverted and disconnected from the audience. I guess my advice is, don't allow male musicians to dissuade you from feeling empowered by playing music, and totally capable of rocking. And to keep in mind that although gender informs and shapes the content of someone's music (it definitely does for Palberta), it isn't a genre of music in and of itself. So when someone completely reduces your music to "female-fronted" or "all-girl band," tell them why those descriptions say nothing about the music

itself, and why your creativity and all-around shredding abilities are not contingent on your gender identity.
Anina: My advice is, do it all yourself. Learn about cables and mics so that even when sound guys try and belittle you at shows you can be like fuck you and I fucking know my shit so fuck off.
Lily: I think it's fucked up and unfair that anyone should have to deal with it. I have been treated as a novelty and belittled by men in the music scene since day one. It makes me truly angry. It comes up so often that it is always on my mind in musical situations with males in a way I wish it didn't have to be. Don't let any man condescend to you. Call them out. Don't let them fuck with you.

completely about colors and shapes and that's how I make art with Palberta too. It's confusing and blurry but it makes sense to me.

MRR: Can you name some visual artists that inspire you?
Nina: Ani and Lily's video work, Sam Ryser, Izzy Kross, Terry Turtle, Jan Svankmajer, Frida Kahlo, Bosch, Amy Lockhart, Pee Wee's Playhouse, I like a lot of comics and cartoons... the list goes on forever!!!
Anina: Wendy Vanity aka Mad Cat Lady...
Lily: Yeah, I agree with everything Nina says, and also thank you Ben Coonley for showing Ani Mad Cat Lady. And thank you Ani for showing me! In addition to these artists, I love Florine Stettheimer, Pina Bausch (if dance counts), and Pipilotti Rist.

BYE BYE BERTA TOUR DATES
2/10: NEW YORK
2/11: BARD COLLEGE
2/12: ROCHESTER
2/13: BUFFALO
2/14: OBERLIN
2/15: ANN ARBOR
2/16: LOUISVILLE
2/17: ST. LOUIS
2/18: CINNCINNATI
2/19: BLOOMINGTON
2/20: NASHVILLE
2/21: ATLANTA
2/22: CHAPEL HILL
2/23: RALEIGH
2/24: RICHMOND
2/25: WASHINGTON, DC
2/26: BALTIMORE
2/27: PHILADELPHIA

MRR: All three of you use visual art and video production to help shape your work. How does your involvement with visual art inform the world of Palberta?
Nina: I'm sure the visual / video art we make influences our aesthetic choices for our band. We like to match our outfits, we created a font for all of our album covers that we consistently use, and we always make our own album artwork for physical releases. Our T-shirts follow a chronological meatloaf saga.
Anina: I like to imagine the stage when I make videos. Performance is visual art. Palberta is visual performance. The connection is there somewhere.
Lily: I guess I see us as characters when we are on stage and I like how it looks. When I make art it's pretty much

MRR: What's your favorite kind of chip?
Nina: Voodoo chips. They're off the chain. Blue corn tortilla chips with a lil chili powder, cracked pepper chips.
Anina: The other day I was thinking about how Pringles are manufactured to fit your tongue. The Tortilla scoop chip is kind of my niche cuz I like a lot of salsa to a little chip.
Lily: I love those Loaded chips from Canada, where they have every kind of chip in one bag. Also, cracked pepper chips. Or just the classic tortilla chip.

The Bye Bye Berta *LP will be released by Wharf Cat in February. Listen at wharfcatrecords.bandcamp.com.*

VIDA RUIM

Vida Ruim members are among some of the most die-hard punk rock soldiers in the DIY punk scene in Curitiba, Brazil. Being into this life since the early 2000s, Sad, Chico and Shú kept on rocking by playing in shit tons of bands, promoting shows and being loyal to do-it-yourself ethics. Vida Ruim was born mature since all of its members had a good amount of experience in previous bands. Now they're putting out their first 7", with solid ideas and identity since day one. I talked to them last April, when the record was getting pressed and they were all stoked about the new recording. Their lyrics, which are usually about still being an outcast after all those years, sounded extremely legit to the political and social backlash that Brazil was moving towards. We talked a bit about that but little we knew what was about to happen. A few days later, the first woman president in the country got impeached by a congressmen coup supported by the same old powerful scum that reigned over the country for ages. These facts make this debut 7" even more on point. Here's the talk we had with these old punk lads during those hard times.

Interview by Leonardo Cavalli.
Photos provided by Elaine Bublitz, Marcela Belz, RG Photo, Winnie Campos. Art and flyers by Chico Felix.
Translation by Juliana Almeida.

MRR: Can you tell us a bit about your veteran history serving punk rock in Curitiba and how Vida Ruim got started?

Sad: I'm from Rio de Janeiro. I used to play in some bands over there, like Ack and Os Estudantes' first EP (when *MRR* thought we were cool). I moved to Curitiba in 2000 and started Evil Idols, a garage punk band. Around 2006 Evil Idols went on a hiatus, I wasn't playing in any bands and Chico and Shú's previous band (Arma Laranja) was a little slow.

Chico: In fact the band had already broke up!

Shú: We had broke up but still wanted to play kind of the same style…

Sad: I told them "I can play guitar in [Arma Laranja!]", but they preferred to start a new band.

Chico: Shú and I have been playing together for sixteen years. Some of the bands we played in were called Morte Asceta, Jesus Mongolóide, Regime Tentáculo, plus some other projects we never recorded. Before that I played in Test Ban Treaty (featured on the infamous *Thrashmaster* comp) and Shú in Russian School of Ballet and White Christian Disaster, which was the first band I've ever seen and made me want to be part of the scene and start playing in bands.

MRR: How was the transition from Arma Laranja to Vida Ruim?

Chico: We both used to play on Jesus Mongolóide, which had just broke up, but wanted to keep playing that kind of sound, early '80s punk rock, more raw stuff. At that time our friend Bianca (former Infect member from São Paulo) had just moved to Curitiba and we started playing together. We put out a 7" and recorded more material but then the band broke up.

But I still wanted to play, so one day late at night Shú drunk called me and said "let's play with Sad, he wanna join the band!"
Shú: Really?
Chico: Yeah, you were both drunk, called me late at night!

MRR: Then you guys started playing Arma Laranja's songs?
Sad: Actually only one Arma Laranja's song.

MRR: Your sound has changed a lot since the early days.
Chico: At first we had no idea about how it would come out. We covered Dead Moon, Sonics... And our songs were more straightforward and slower. We kept playing for a while without having a proper name, then we decided on Rock Animals. When we started writing our more recent songs we changed the name to Vida Ruim (Bad Life).
Sad: That was two or three years ago. We still play songs from the Rock Animals era. But then we started writing some faster songs.
Chico: And we started playing a bit differently. It ended up turning into a band that mixed '80s punk like the Dead Kennedys with some more weird stuff and some Brazilian punk. Since we sing in Portuguese, the way we put the lyrics into the song is very unique.
Sad: And because we started having more Brazilian Punk references we decided on the name Vida Ruim, which is a Ratos de Porão's song.

MRR: I heard your son gave the idea for the previous name. Is that true, Chico?
Chico: Yes, it was the name of a toy that came with a comic book he likes. Since we didn't have a name, it ended up staying longer that he had planned. But I prefer Vida Ruim not only because it's a Ratos de Porão reference, but also because of Public Image they have a song called Bad Life. And it's a really visual name, you can do really cool artwork with that. Cause when you start a band you have to think about the artwork, the music concept, the best distortion for it, the band's name.
MRR: You guys mentioned Brazilian Punk. Who influenced the band? Start naming the classics...
Chico: I really like Garotos Podre's lyrics, but their sound is not really similar to ours.
Sad: I'm really into Cólera, this is common sense in Brazil. Cólera has always been a reference for me since it was probably the first Brazilian Punk band I've ever listened to.

MRR: What shows did you see that made want to start a band?
Sad: First punk show I've ever seen was Ratos de Porão, but I was already playing in a band. I started listening to punk at a really young age, and in Rio de Janeiro there were not many punk shows going on.
Chico: A really good one was White Christian Disaster (from Curitiba) at DCE. That was my first time at DCE (a show spot at a university campus) and it was fucking awesome. Firstly because it was guys at my age doing stuff better than anyone else at that time. Secondly because it was punk but not a retro punk. It was a futuristic punk, talking about stuff from nowadays. And they were convicted about what they were talking about. And no one knew how to play but the ideas made it sound great. Two singers, super different. Shows were great! It blew my mind.

MRR: And nowadays, how do you guys like the punk scene?
Chico: Well, there's the punk scene and there's our group of friends.

MRR: What do you mean by that?
MRR: In a punk scene there's gotta be conflict, a clash of ideas. Different ideas around. This is one thing. A group of friends is another. This is people who come over to your house, drink tea together...There are also different kinds of scenes here in Curitiba, and this is really cool. Bands that aren't punk per se, but have an independent approach.
Sad: People complain a lot here in Curitiba but there's always a lot of stuff going on around the whole town. Sometimes we don't even know about some shows.

MRR: I may be wrong but I feel there's not a new generation here in this town. People attending shows are the

same ones that have been going for ten years. There aren't fifteen kids going to shows.

Sad: Ten years ago there were a bunch of young people going to shows. Mostly straightedge or melodic hardcore shows. Nowadays these events seem smaller and the crowd got older.

Chico: But it also depends on the show. Things are really divided nowadays. Different shows got different crowds. It also depends on the period of time. In the '90s there were epic shows from local bands. But then things got changed.

Sad: It's way more divided. When I moved here there were one or two shows going on and everyone would go to those. Now there are ten or twelve shows going on at the same time in the city.

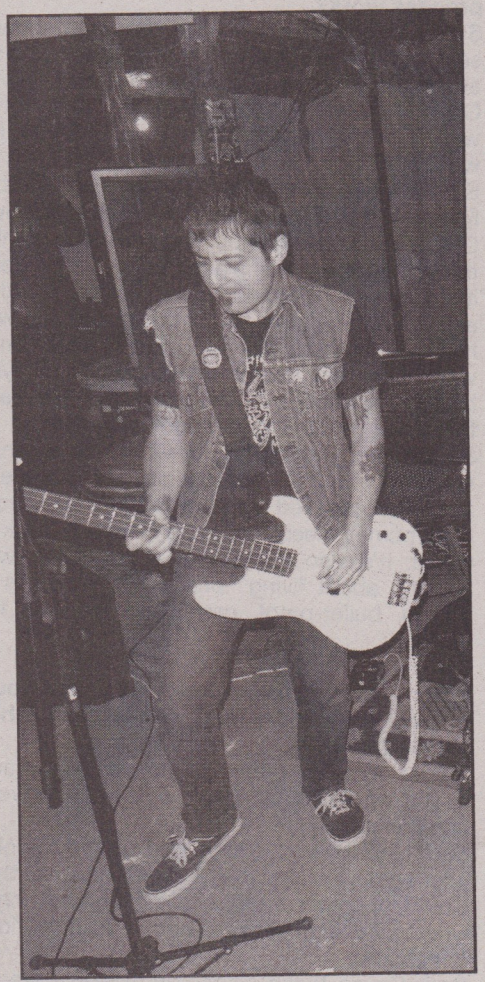
Shú: Back in the days, when there was a show, everyone would go. And there were shows in many different spots.

Chico: Sometimes the show would be in a punk house and everyone would go...Not in a proper venue and it would happen just once.

Sad: Like in a college campus, or a restaurant.

Chico: Once there was a show inside a factory.

Shú: Once Catharsis played in an empty warehouse. Someone managed to open it and the show happened over there.



MRR: How do your punk ethics affect your daily lives, like friends and jobs?

Shú: A fucking lot. Since my teenage years everything I do is related to punk stuff. I used to own a practice space / recording studio. Then when I started working a regular job, with non-punk people, it was weird. I had to learn... maybe I never did since I just quit my job! *[laughs]*

Chico: I'm unemployed! Punk as fuck!

Sad: I've been working for the same company since I moved here. My job is my only way to afford playing in a band. It's like a parallel life. But there's always things that end up influencing our jobs someway. Like, I can't handle hierarchy. And I try to apply this to my job, treating everyone the same way. Making things happen even not having everything we need. That's probably because I work in a place where we all like what we do. Otherwise I probably wouldn't be working there for so long.

MRR: Chico does comic books and he's probably the one who can better deal with work x DIY ethics dilemma...

Chico: Right now I don't have a boss, but I had all kinds of shitty jobs in my life, like delivery boy...All kinds of dead-end jobs, including entrepreneur! I used to own that studio with Shú, and that was an attempt to join work with something we liked.

MRR: All your bands have a very strong visual identity. What does the connection between image and band mean to you?

Chico: At first I had no clue about it. I started making show posters and flyers by necessity. We didn't have computers at that time and I was the only person who kinda knew how to draw. Then I started learning more and more about drawing. During Morte Asceta times, that's when I realized artwork and music are a combo. I talked a lot with Mario (Morte Asceta's singer) about that, trying to make a connection between artwork, band's name, song names, lyrics, the way we play, all in sync. Trying to figure out what we wanted. So after that, all our bands had this aspect nailed down, like in Jesus Mongolóide and Regime Tentáculo (although theartwork wasn't mine on that one). Then in Evil Idols all of these things worked really well cause the band has a lot in common with my drawings. It was really easy, just pick up any drawing I did and add the band's name! Now in Vida Ruim we like to use this against our status quo theme, in a kinda psychedelic / on acid way.

MRR: You guys are putting out a record this year. Tell us about the new material. Besides that, what have you put out so far?
Chico: We did three different recordings that were put out in weird ways. When the band was still called Rock Animals we put out a CD-R with a cover and stuff. The other ones we just put on the internet. But now we're putting out a 7" with eight songs. And there's a Misfits tribute comp that we're on, with a version of "TV Casualty in Portuguese."

MRR: Are you guys are the ones putting it out?
Chico: We've always done this way. Since the early days with our record label called L-dopa, our bands White Christian Disaster and Russian School of Ballet. I never though anyone else would put us out! Like, "Oh you guys are great, I wanna put you guys out!" Also Sad was the one doing the recording. He had previous experience recording Evil Idols. This made us get stoked about recording on our own way, with good quality. It's not a four-track recording. We had a good amount of songs that fit well. Even the lyrics fit well.
Sad: It ended up sounding like a real record.
Shú: Also cause the band has been going on for many years and we barely had any recordings.

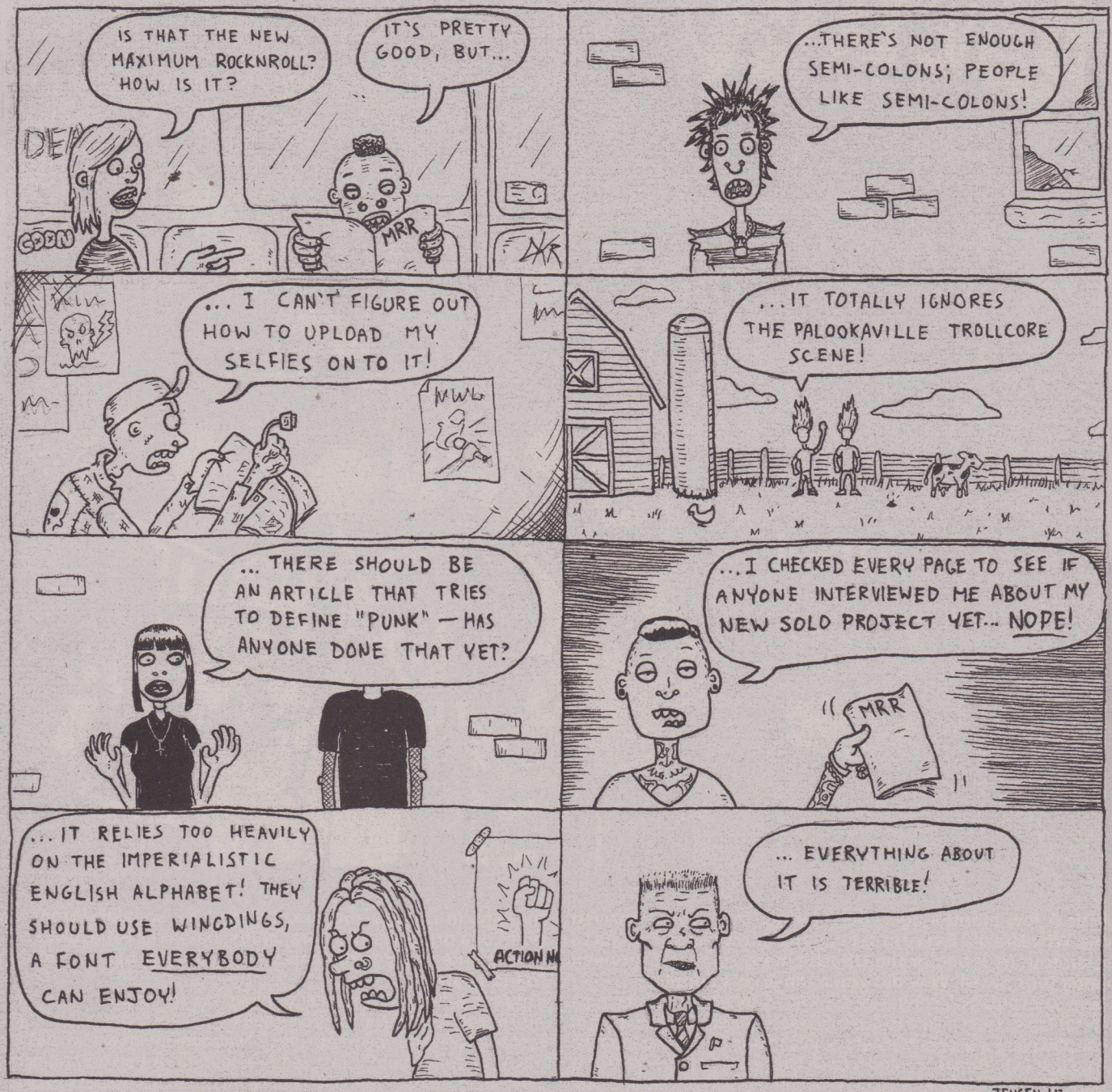
MRR: Who writes Vida Ruim's lyrics? How does the process work?
Sad: Sometimes someone in the band show up with song and lyrics, sometime someone brings a song and another one writes part of the lyrics and the vocals...
Chico: Now we're trying to do the other way around, writing lyrics first and then music. Not sure if that will work but...
Sad: This record ended up having kind of a theme. The lyrics are about things we're living in right now.
Chico: I was talking about it with a friend of mine. I don't think punk is the best place for a political agenda cause it's noisy and weird for most people, mostly anti-pop and counter-cultural. But at the same time, when I write lyrics, I'll probably talk about our real life. I'm not gonna write about fairy tales or mythology. So our lyrics end up having a kind of political agenda. But in a sarcastic and funny way, not trying to preach anything.
Sad: Some lyrics are about what's going on nowadays, some are about our approach to personal life. A criticism about our messed up daily routine: leave to work / get back home / sleep / wake up / leave to work...
Chico: It's also a criticism about our nowadays local society, about living "protected" by walls and gates, driving bullet-proof cars, hanging out in shopping malls...

MRR: Sad and Chico have kids, and you guys have a song about parenting. Tell us about how the idea showed up.
Chico: It's not really about being a dad, it's about becoming an "authoritative figure." Now we are the lame breadwinners.
Sad: Like when our dads told us "you punk, when I was your age I was already the breadwinner of the family!"
Chico: And now we really are the breadwinners. But those lyrics got a lot of sense of humor. All our lyrics have a kinda dark humor.
Sad: Cause those lyrics say "*When I was young it was different, it wasn't that easy*," but the chorus is "*Where did I go wrong?*", which can be interpreted as dad going wrong with me, or me going wrong with my life. One is enjoying their life, the other is not. So in this case, it's a very personal view: am I doing the right thing? Am I telling the right things to my daughter?

MRR: How old is the band?
Chico: Seven years, I guess. I mean, we've been playing together for 7 years, but officially as Vida Ruim for three years.
Shú: I think it's important to have a good recording. I played in many bands in the past that I regret not having a proper recording.

MRR: Let's talk a bit about Brazil. We've been facing a conservative rise in society, and it seems this ends up reflecting in punk...
Chico: Yes, cause punk is made by people, not by aliens. By people who have all kinds of insanity and problems. Punk is still a safe space in my opinion, even though there may be some annoying people. It is still better than a lot of things. If we think about the recent rise of religious people in the government, with real conservative, homophobic, sexist, anti-human rights values, supporting a dictatorship comeback...It's fucked up, like a dark cloud, people supporting a fascist state, goddamn! I've never thought I would see a young person supporting such thing. So when you see people in punk saying some bullshit, it's nothing compared to such a thing. The debate in punk is usually between more left wing or more radical people. This is nothing compared to this fanatical religious people taking power, saying the only legit family is a nuclear family. This is a real brutal thing.

Listen to the new EP at vidaruim.bandcamp.com.



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(PUBLICATION NOT GUARANTEED)

Beton

Lichtle, guitarist of Slovakian crust behemoths Beton, reflects on the band's recent Brazilian tour (featured in MRR #403!), the need to say "no!" to the rise of the right, and future plans.

Interview by Mattus. Photo provided by Tomas Kusa.

MRR: A few months ago you returned from your Brazilian tour. Why Brazil? Every crustie, punk or metalhead wants to go on tour in Japan or the US. Not many eastern European bands tour Brazil. Why did you choose this country?
There's not much of "choosing" some country and not choosing a different one. I just talked to Josi of Execradores / Tuna at a gig in Bratislava about a possibility of doing a tour in Brazil and then we just did it. I've always wanted to visit Brazil for its huge hardcore / punk / metal scene and when it became possible the decision was clear. Of course, we would also like to tour the US or Japan, but we don't have many contacts in those countries and the only "invitation" we got turned out to just be empty words.

MRR: I have to ask you about the 2016 Olympic Games, which took place a month after you were in Brazil. How did you perceive them? Did the Games interfere with your tour in any way? Or did you not even notice?
You could see that there were many reconstructions going on in order to cover and hide the real problems Brazil currently has, but since most of the gigs we played were in São Paulo state, the Olympics didn't really interfere with our tour. There were some protests in Rio organized right after our tour so we couldn't really see / join anything.

MRR: You all have played many shows all around Europe. I'm wondering whether there is anything different between the gigs in Europe and Brazil. Let's say, speaking from the point of a promoter (posters, clubs, backline, food, drinks or the attitude towards the bands) or a random person coming to the show.
There are differences, but nothing too significant. The gigs are mostly organized by collectives in clubs, squats, or some restaurants. The weirdest place we played in would be the mix between a pub, a fast food restaurant, a ballroom dancing / wedding celebration hall with a gas station attached to it in Itapetininga.

The backline in the venues is typically shared by all the bands on the bill and consists of not so state of the art Marshall copies, Meteoros, which you sometimes set by a series of punches and kicks rather than by the knobs. (They often end up loose in your hands after touching them.)

As for food, you get your rice-beans-soya combo thing that you unsuccessfully try to flush down with a frozen corn beer. (No idea why they freeze their beers!)

Something that especially stands out is the attitude towards the bands. The common ultra-positive helpfulness, happiness, and generosity (even though most of the folks there were rather poor) of the people that you experience won't leave you the same. You will start questioning your abilities and possibilities for "being better and giving away more than before!" The musical fanaticism that you see there is really powerful.

MRR: Afterparties? Are they as wild as they are here, or do people prefer to go home after the show? Any drunk parties till dawn, finishing fucked at gas stations with a bottle of rum and no memories? Tell us some of the wildest stories (in good and bad senses) that you experienced there.
Well, we got to an age where being on tour is no longer such unlimited fun and if we wanna survive two or three weeks in a car, moving from town to town, playing shows, we have to be a bit careful. But still, we were a bit surprised that no huge parties took place and people often quickly disappeared right after the gigs. For Brazilians it's typical to buy a 1.5–2 litre bottle of beer for four or five people once or twice a night and that's it. We, taking one bottle each, were regarded as serious drunkards.

MRR: What I've read and heard about Brazil, it seems pretty wild out there—gangs, crime, drugs. I think the See You In Hell guys once told me about a gig they'd played somewhere in Brazil where someone had fired a Panzerfaust in a nearby neighborhood. Is there a lot of violence at the gigs? Do people from gangs visit punk shows? If so, I wonder if there's any rivalry or hostility between gang members and punks or whether it works on some mutual respect and tolerance (if we can call it that at all)?
I was talking about this with Urbano, the Desastre drummer, but if I understood correctly, there's no real connection between gangs and punks, or at least not in Goiania, GO, where they live. I don't know about other parts of Brazil.

Throughout the whole tour, we didn't see almost any violence. Although, playin in Rio's Suburbio Alternativo, a club on the edge of one of the Rio's favelas, we were advised not to leave the area of the club and definitely not to enter the favela itself.

In Goiania, Glauco's (the promoter of the event, Death From Above's guitar player) girlfriend got robbed by some fuckers pointing a gun to her head just in front of the club. Brazilians are somehow used to certain level of street violence and are not really so terrified by these kind of events. Still, I think the image of violence in Brazil is to a certain extent created by media and doesn't really represent the reality.

MRR: Were you also interested in the Brazilian system of society? Is there any middle class or is the society polarized between the rich and the poor? Are there many homeless people in the streets? Or is it more like middle class style with clubs, pubs, shops?
Many years ago I did an interview with I Shot Cyrus from São Paulo and the guys said that living in Brazil was like a subway ride from the richest parts of Hollywood to the poorest slums you could imagine in couple minutes. And it's true. There are many homeless people in the streets everywhere, specifically in São Paulo. At the same time you have random middle / upper class people passing by trying not to notice anything disturbing. However in my opinion, the difference between the rich and the poor is far bigger than in Europe.

MRR: How is it with merch at concerts? Do people buy LPs, CDs, t-shirts, zines?
I guess it's not really easy for everyone there to buy band's merch every time. The money can really be an issue. We were somehow lucky though and sold almost everything we had brought in and could cover at least a bit of our flight tickets.

People were really into vinyl because it's very expensive to release it in Brazil and so they prefer LPs more than CDs.

MRR: The Japanese punk scene, for example, is known for its professionalism and cleanness. Sometimes I feel like it is already a bit beyond the classic DIY ethics. How is it in Brazil? Is it all neat and clean there, or is it rather messy?
Since I've never been to Japan I can't compare. But I guess it's different. The gigs almost always started precisely on time and people were present at the first band. Still from time to time few things were sorted a bit "slower than expected" and as I mentioned the backline / sound / PA is on a completely different level. Generally everything went smoothly, though.

MRR: Let's go a little further from Brazil. Your album *Konsky Kokot* is awesome music, with a thick sound and great packaging. I feel that over the years you have completely found what you want to do and so everything sounds and looks so authentic and sincere. I can feel a bit of each one of you in it. People's reactions are certainly positive. Has this LP got you anywhere further? I am not saying that you previously stood at one place—your older stuff is great as well. But this LP is a completely different level.
First of all thank you for such praise—I'm really happy you like the album. It's obviously always rewarding when you hear something positive about your work, but it's important to stay calm and modest. Working on *Konsky Kokot* took us fuckin' lot of time and energy. We changed the lineup throughout the time so it's more or less obvious that you get elsewhere with new people after four or five years. I'm always trying to push myself a bit forward, since I regard the opposite as counterproductive. On the other hand, remembering our roots is crucial for us as well.

MRR: What about the future? New songs, concerts, recordings? So far your lineup has changed with each recording. I'm not saying that the full picture of the band differs drastically, but it was always something a bit new, whether it relates to your sound or structure of songs. Will this new lineup also bring something new or will you walk your path with the direction set by the last LP?
I guess it's gonna be a bit from both. We want to continue in the style of the songs we created for the LP but at the same time, I can already say that the new songs will sound harder.

We want to release a discography CD on Mundo En Kaos Records in Mexico spanning the time from 2005 till now and do a Mexican tour in summer 2017 (anyone wanting to help with the gigs, contact us!). There are plans to release a split 7" with Slovakian crusties ROXOR and a full 7" EP. Any labels interested in releasing this shit are more than welcomed!

MRR: What do you think about the fact that more and more clubs, either in Bratislava or generally anywhere throughout Slovakia, are being contacted by neo-Nazis regarding their gigs / events, and some venues have no problems cooperating with these people?
Clearly this is a fucking horrible problem and we strictly boycott those places. But at the same time I'm at least happy to also see more and more clubs saying "*No!*" to those bastards. Fuck that shit!

MRR: In short say who you are, what are your activities, other bands, projects, zines, possibly something from the past, which would be worth mentioning. Also I'm interested in what you were listening to while answering the questions.
My name's Lichtle, I play guitar and I don't have any special activities. I used to do a fanzine and a small record label called Biosfear, but that was years ago. From time to time I set up a gig for some friends' band but aside of that there's not much activity on my side. I'm trying to fully concentrate on working on new songs for Beton. The drummer and the guitar player also play in a doom / sludge project Schwarz with me.

While typing the answers I got through Ulver's *Kveldsanger*, Bathory's self-titled, the new Brujeria album, Moment Maniacs – *2 Fuckin Pieces*, Maurice Ravel's *Bolero* and *Daphne and Chloe*, Chopin's *Nocturnes*, some Armenian folk music, Driller Killer – *Brutalize*, Swedish Merciless, Interment, and a lot more. Took some time!

betoncrust.bandcamp.com

CULT VALUES - S/T LP

GENERACIÓN SUICIDA - SOMBRAS LP

G.L.O.S.S. - TRANS DAYS OF REVENGE 7"

WARSONG - CONTROL LP

THE BELLICOSE MINDS - CREATURE LP

LOW CULTURE - PLACES TO HIDE LP

MACHO BOYS - DEMO TAPE

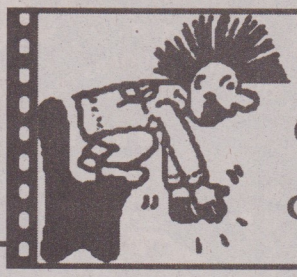
SILENT ERA - S/T 7"

SUICIDAS - BAILE DES MASCARAS 7"

SABOTAGE

sabotagerecords.net
sabotagerecords.bandcamp.com

MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

We are always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let us know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. We will go see it.

In 2010 infamous artist Banksy came to San Francisco and left some work around the city. Since Banksy's medium is spray paint, his canvases walls, and he doesn't get permission to do the pieces, they are considered graffiti. The city of San Francisco does not like graffiti. It doesn't matter if it looks really nice and makes humorous social statements. The building owners are ordered to paint over their Banksys or get fined. Most of them choose the former until art collector Brian Greif decides he needs to save one of them. **Saving Banksy** is the story of him doing it as well as his attempt at giving it away.

The Banksy Greif saves is on the second floor of The Red Victorian, a hotel on Haight Street. The drawing is of one of Banksy's rats spray painting. The piece extends to another building separated by the roof of the building between them. The other part gets tagged pretty quickly so Greif only saves the rat. Greif's goal is to donate it to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

As it turns out saving a piece of graffiti is not an easy task. Trying to give it to a museum is even harder. **Saving Banksy** interviews many street artists. The artists seem to be unanimous in their belief that street art belongs on the street. It is for people to enjoy and if it gets destroyed that's the way it is. Not everyone feels that way. Banksy's stuff is hip so **Saving Banksy** also interviews art dealer Stephan Keszler. Keszler sells Banksy's work without his permission making a lot of money. Naturally, he becomes the villain of the story.

One thing about San Francisco graffiti law I don't understand is the lack of a process for a building owner to say that a defacing is actually art. Shouldn't a property owner be allowed to decide that even though something was done without their permission they like it so it can stay? Of course, that gets into the larger discussion of what is art. A name hastily scribbled on a doorway may not look like art to me, but it probably does to someone else. Banksy's rat looks pretty cool on the side of the Red Vic building. It would have been nice to be able to enjoy it from Haight Street whenever we wanted.

Saving Banksy doesn't solve the dilemma regarding street art. As a rational person I can see how everyone's point of view makes sense. Well, except for Keszler. Going to Palestine to remove street art from walls with the intention of selling it is reprehensible. Although, **Saving Banksy** never touches on Palestinian graffiti laws—perhaps they are stricter than San Francisco's. (savingbanksy.com)

If Nancy Spungen had died in 2016 instead of 1978 do you think the mystery of it would have been solved? You have to assume one of these disreputable characters who are involved in the story would have documented it in some way. But she didn't, so like it or not we are never going to know. That doesn't stop people from trying. **Sad Vacation: The Last Days Of Sid and Nancy** is the latest attempt. The film does a good job of presenting the facts as they are remembered by people who were there thirty-eight years ago. As such you really need to take the human memory into consideration when deciding on your murderer.

On October 12, 1978 Nancy Spungen bled to death from a stab wound in room 100 at the Chelsea Hotel in New York City. The person who found her was Sid Vicious. He was passed out in the same room and when he came to he saw her on the floor of the bathroom. It was his knife that stabbed her. Vicious confessed that he killed her to the police. He was arrested for the murder. When he was released from jail, his mother threw him a party at which Vicious ODs.

There are lots of theories as to who did it. It could have been a drug deal gone badly. It could have been a robbery. It may have been that Nancy was being annoying. I'd like to believe Sid didn't do it, but he probably did. **Sad Vacation: The Last Days Of Sid And Nancy** would probably be more interesting if I hadn't heard this story many times before. However, for a beginner, **Sad Vacation: The Last Days Of Sid And Nancy** tells the story straightforwardly and without more sensationalism than necessary. (chipbakerfilms.com)

If you're like me and find the second era of Fleetwood Mac incredibly annoying you may also be a little hesitant to explore the first. Perhaps you didn't even know there were two versions. **Peter Green: Man Of The World** is the story of the beginnings of Fleetwood Mac focusing on their main guy, founder, guitar player and songwriter Peter Green.

Fleetwood Mac started out a blues band in England. Green was a great guitar player which has some people in **Peter Green: Man Of The World** proclaim he was better than Eric Clapton. If that doesn't mean anything to you, don't worry about it, but it is meant to be a compliment. The band was hugely successful. They toured the world. Californian band Santana recorded Green's song "Black Magic Woman" which ended up being such a big hit for them it now synonymous with Santana. While on tour in Germany, Green does a bunch of acid at a commune and ends up deciding to quit the band. He later gets diagnosed with schizophrenia and is institutionalized.

Green's story is odd and interesting. He is unlike any rock star. It is a fun historical juxtaposition considering how stereotypical the next version of the band would be.

Peter Green: Man Of The World interviews all the original members of the band plus their manager, roadie and other various other associated people. The only exception is the inclusion of Oasis' Noel Gallagher since he has nothing to do with the band. Fortunately, he is not in it too much.

This month I also caught two cute films about teenagers discovering punk. The first **Sing Street** is the story of a kid in '80s Ireland. Conor is a kid who gets sent to a new school and on the first day gets into trouble for not having the correct shoes. His parents can't afford to get him new ones, but there is a school uniform. He also gets harassed by the school bully along with the other nuisances of teendom. One day he sees a girl hanging out across the street from the school. He tries to impress her by saying he's in a band. He asks her to be in the band's video. From there a band is formed and new punks are born. (streaming everywhere)

In **London Town** fourteen year old Shay lives with his dad and sister. Mom has taken off to live in London. When dad ends up in the hospital after an accident moving a piano, Shay tries to make money to keep the family afloat. Then he meets a punk girl. She likes the Clash and invites him to see them play. Shay's money troubles keep getting worse, but along the way he accidentally meets Joe Strummer who gives him advice and helps him out. Shay's story briefly intertwines with Strummer's as well as episodes from English punk history. He gets in a fight with a skinhead and visits his mom in her London squat. **London Town** plays loose with the scenarios, but the overall feeling of discovering punk is there. It's enjoyable in a sweet way. (londontownfilm.com)

Both **Sing Street** and **London Town** are endearing in their naïveté. I am sure the more punk among us will rail against the liberties taken with the events surrounding the stories. These are not documentaries. Those who can honestly recall their first brushes with punk will find these films a pleasant respite from the current shit show we live in.

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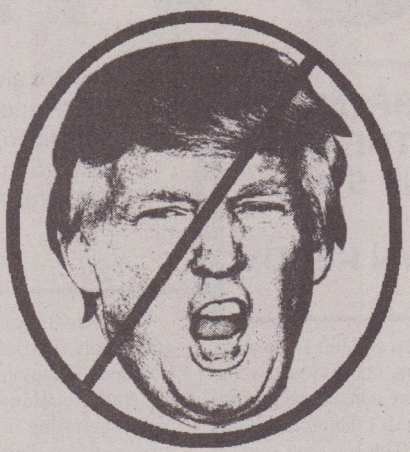

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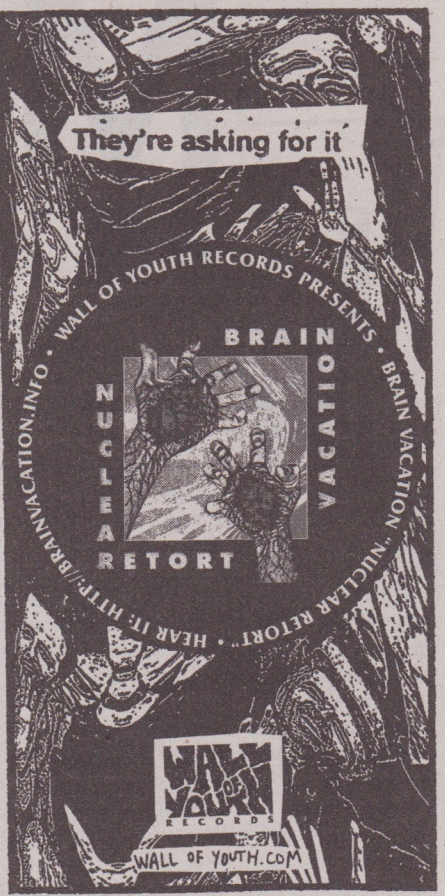


BOOKS

We are always looking for independently-published books to review.
Send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA.
Write to books@maximumrocknroll.com with any questions.

Lost: Complete Fanzine Boxset '80–'83
General Speech
12 issues in slipcover box

Originating as a fanzine and sadly published for only three short years, *Lost* documented the punk and new wave scenes in Lexington, Kentucky through the early '80s. This collection brings together all eleven issues plus a final "bonus" issue which, like free issue #5, is mostly just reverent, utterly unironic photocopies of John Lennon's face accompanied by Beatles quotes and the occasional line from Bob Dylan. This is what makes *Lost* such a strange and compelling artifact: it is undeniably countercultural, but with a different pantheon and historical narrative than that of their peers in practically any other punk scene. Indeed, for the scenesters behind *Lost*, it was new wave—epitomized by bands like the Clash, Killing Joke, Joy Division, and even U2—that was the future, with punk merely acting as a catalyst. "Punk created the opening," one screed reads, "and new wave began to fill it." Basically every issue features photocopied images of John Lennon or the Beatles—this trend continues even after the addition of comic artist and political polemicist Bill Widener whose writing and art, beginning with issue #6, grant the magazine an edgier, more political tone. Later issues include diatribes against Reagan, criticism of American support of Israel during the First Lebanon War, and, in the final issue, an admission by the editors that Vietnam and anti-nuclear protests were the motivation for starting the zine.

Fascinatingly, the rise and fall of the zine parallels that of a band regularly mentioned in its pages, an ex-members outfit called the Chinese. Mentioned first in issue #4 in an utterly unimpressed show review ("The songs lacked freshness and the musicians seemed bored"), The Chinese quickly became scene darlings alongside early Louisville legends Babylon Dance Band, Your Food, and the Endtables. Glowing write-ups of their shows grace every issue until #10, which is the farewell issue of both band and zine. (Both also have one more encore farewell, the zine's issue #11 which covers the band's real last performance and includes lengthy interviews with two now ex-members.) The DVD included in the collection features a few of the band's performances (along with live footage of Active Ingredients, Dementia Precox, Thrusters, and Red Interiors)—unfortunately, my copy was somehow corrupted and I was unable to watch them, but I am strangely thankful that the mystery has been preserved.

Lost is a fascinating reminder of a time when the world felt more open and free, when a handful of creative, music-obsessed weirdos in a small, middle American city could fill the pages of their handmade magazine with reviews of local punk albums alongside paeans to the boys from Liverpool without any apparent contradiction. From issue #10: "The British punk movement sprouted from the factory worker's children—for groups like the Sex Pistols and many others, fame through rock and roll meant a way out of the continual poverty they were accustomed to. Parallels can be drawn from when four poor lads from Liverpool invaded America with guitars in hand." More than thirty years later, skimming through the pages of *Lost* can show us the possibilities that still remain latent in our own era, however sclerotic and calcified it might feel. In our own dark times—which much resemble the Reagan years in which *Lost* was penned—documents such as these can, in the words of *Lost* editorialist Dr. Smallhead, show us that "even in the years of darkness ahead, there will come streaks of light so great they'll put the darkness to shame."

—Joey Keegin

MDC: Memoir from a Damaged Civilization
Dave Dictor
$15.95 | 192 pgs
Manic D Press

Dave Dictor, in book form, is the punk rock grandpa. Where Keith Morris is the crazy, unpredictable uncle, Henry Rollins is a cousin that's been to jail, and Greg Graffin is your parents' college professor friend who gives you textbooks as gifts, Dave Dictor is the one whose lap you want to sit on and fall asleep listening to a story. His coming of age story is not going to be much of a surprise for anyone who has read a few other punk memoirs, including the alienation, early drug use (and later drug abuse), distrust of authority, and even the proclivity towards wearing women's clothes. However, Dave presents his stories with such pleasant, tender warmth, that it almost feels more bizarre than the canon punk birth.

The real meat (or vegetable-based protein) of this story is the formation, frequent reincarnation, and decades of touring of MDC. Anyone with even a passable knowledge of the band and the punk scene throughout the last 35+ years is going to have a few moments where they pop at the telling of a story involving someone or some place they recognize. Firsthand accounts of mistaken identity with Exene from X, loud, fast, and angry misogyny and homophobia from HR from Bad Brains, the discovery of a like minded youngster in Stza from Choking Victim, and getting to play for the Pope, unbeknownst to him, all pepper the longer tale of seeing the world and figuring out how to stay alive. There are also more than just a few mentions of Tim Yohannan and various *Maximum Rocknroll* shitworkers playing sizable

roles in the story.

Beyond the music, tales of pets, children, and significant others should come as no surprise, as in the lives of most people, but yet, they can't help but feel nutritive in the face of the malnourished path through punk rock aging. The tales of regrettable sexual encounters and burned bridges come off as comforting lectures from a trusted mentor. There are plenty of stories about interacting with cops, and some are surprisingly humorous, as is the case with one particular Elvis fan in blue. Possibly the most unknown to most readers will be the years spent earning degrees in special education and teaching developmentally disabled students. A short, humorous takedown of the DARE program to his students should be satisfying for anyone who was forced to spend a tedious session with whatever sad cop pulled the short straw that day. The time spent on these personal bits are the final brush strokes on the stained canvas of this book.

This is a must read for anyone with even the slightest interest in MDC or the '80s hardcore scene, and if he ever decides to make this an audiobook, many in the punk scene will be able to throw out their self-prescribed sleep aides and just curl up with Grandpa Dictor. No war, no KKK, no fascist USA!

—Ryan Hertel

A Book About Colab (and Related Activities)
Edited by Max Schumann
$39.95 | 256 pgs
Printed Matter Inc.

Cooperation is hard. This is especially true within creative work, where the mania for individual genius combines with a lack of opportunity to ensure that artists focus on themselves rather than work with others. Collaborative Projects, Inc. (known better as Colab) was formed in the late 1970s in direct opposition to this idea. Formalizing the rough network that already existed among young malcontents in downtown New York, Colab proposed a sustainable existence separate from the museums and galleries. The practical function of the group was to take advantage of grants for organizations, which were less competitive and bigger than individual artist grants. The actual effect of Colab was to bind artists together and magnify their impact.

The best examples of how Colab worked are the massive, multi-artist exhibitions produced between 1977–80. Built around basic themes like Income and Wealth or The Doctors and Dentists Show or The Times Square Show, these projects favored wild and unexpected arrangements. Since there were no curators or standards; artists simply had to show up with completed work in order to be included. This liberated Colab artists to work in non-commercial formats like performance, wheatpasted photocopies, and video, and encouraged extreme positions and unpopular topics that would've been too alienating in the established art world. Unsurprisingly, there was much crossover with punk and no wave, as members of Y Pants, the electric eels, and the Contortions all participated in Colab.

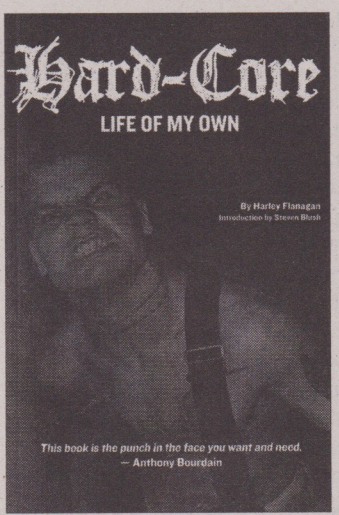
A Book About Colab (and Related Activities) echoes the dense, anarchic tone of these historic Colab projects. There is a crispness and organization to its design, but also a sense of minimal editing. It's obvious that the artists were very much in control of how their words and images are shared in the book. Some contribute multi-page essays, other submit just one sentence. Remarkably, there isn't much tension between the archival material and the contemporary commentary. There's very little nostalgia; instead there's a sense that each artist remains dedicated to the politics and vision of Colab, continuing to work towards them in different ways. Peter Fend is especially succinct in his comments: "I ASK NOT WHAT COLAB DID BUT WHETHER IT CAN (YET) BENEFIT OUR PLANET."

The inherent difficulties of Colab are clearly on view in the book. In both the old and new material, art's role in gentrification is interrogated. There's a historical awareness of art's inability to create large-scale change. Many of the present-day recollections mention the agony of the weekly meetings, with more than one artist confessing to an inability to sit through a single discussion. Jane Sherry speaks about "boy artist syndrome," which she describes as "a vast sense of self importance and entitlement." Irritations and arguments resurface: Robin Winters, whose loft hosted several exhibitions, recalls a rare instance of work being refused from a Colab show: "I lived there, so when bloody dog bones were dumped on the floor for *The Dog Show* I said no, as they would smell."

Despite these differences, each of the contributing artists acknowledges the importance of Colab's structure, the break it provided from viewing artists as winners and losers, and the redistribution of power it allowed. Thirty-five years later it's easy to look over the exhibition posters reprinted in the book and pluck out the famous names: Jenny Holzer, Jean-Michel Basquiat, David Hammons, Kiki Smith. But the subsequent successes and failures of individuals seem inconsequential in the context of *A Book About Colab*, which tells a much better story about the value of collaboration.

Forty dollars is a lot to pay for a book, so I would also recommend the following online sources for information about Colab: collaborativeprojectsarchive.wikispaces.com; 98bowery.com, which includes a complete scan of the 1985 ABC No Rio book; and archive.org/details/xfrstn which includes hundreds of films and videos relating to Colab.

—Ethan Swan



Hard-Core: Life Of My Own
Harley Flanagan
$23.95 | 448 pgs
Feral House

Two summers ago I listened to the audiobook autobiography of John Joseph. Joseph was / is frontman for the infamous and legendary NYHC band Cro-Mags. The audiobook had Joseph recounting his life story and how it led to his time in the Cro-Mags and eventually the highly publicized drama that took place between him and Cro-Mags bass-player: Harley Flanagan. John Joseph's *Evolution Of A Cro-Magnon* was first released in 2008, and his account of Cro-Mags's history went unanswered for eight years. This year we finally get to hear the other side of the story from Harley himself with his new autobiography, *Hard-Core: Life Of My Own.*

Harley's book received a high amount of publicity when it got endorsed by television personality: Anthony Bourdain. Harley did multiple signings and performances to support the release of the book, many of which took place in New York City (where I live) so I had quite the appetite to read this book by the time I got my hands on it.

Harley starts his story by sharing memories from his unbelievable childhood. He was raised by a single, nomadic mother who was involved with the hippies in the sixties, and later ran around in Andy Warhol's circle (even starring in one of his unreleased films). Harley spent his childhood living in various places in the U.S. and all across Europe, sometimes staying in communes and squats that survived the hippie movement. Harley and his mom finally settled down when they moved in with his aunt in her New York City apartment (the same apartment that Allen Ginsberg was living in).

Harley's aunt, Denise Mercedes, had punk credentials of her own: jamming with Iggy Pop, and being personal friends with Bob Dylan among some of them. Recently turned on to the punk rock movement, Denise was starting a band of her own. Harley, who had experimented with many instruments while growing up, auditioned for his aunt's band (who was in need of a drummer) and got the part. Harley was now the official drummer for NYC punk legends, the Stimulators.

With the Stimulators, Harley was plunged into the heart of the New York punk scene and was able to perform all across the United States and in some parts of Europe. He quickly found himself meeting and hanging out with musicians such as the Dead Boys, the Clash, Blondie, Bad Brains, and basically every iconic legend in the punk scene at the time.

When the Stimulators finally came to an end, the first era of punk was ending and the hardcore punk movement was beginning. By this point Harley was a bit of a legend and knew basically everyone in the New York scene. Harley was very eager to start his own band and had a large network of people choose from. After a multitude of member changes Harley found himself with a functional group of musicians, which became the first incarnation of Cro-Mags.

Harley was heavily involved in the newly blossomed NYHC scene and was getting Cro-Mags on all the hot gigs. Cro-Mags soon outgrew only playing locally, and hit the road. The first experiences on the road were raw for the band. They barely had enough money to pay for gas, let alone to stay fed. Eventually, however, the tough days on the road paid off, and Cro-Mags found themselves on the road with huge touring acts specifically the infamous Motörhead tour.

Fans of the band will not be disappointed with all the fine details of Cro-Mags history that Harley retells. The song by song breakdown of *Age Of Quarrel* and recording notes from *Best Wishes* and *Alpha & Omega* were a big highlight of the book for me.

Despite their rise to success, it's no secret that internal conflict derailed the path of Cro-Mags. The Motörhead tour was quickly followed by a "merry-go-round" of member changes, including the on-again off-again status of lead singer John "Bloodclot" Joseph. Harley provides, in excruciating detail, his side of the story concerning the downward spiral of the band, his eventual falling out with John Joseph, and the effect all of it had on his personal life.

Amidst the chaos of Harley's story there are tender moments. Now it's 2016 and Harley is able to look at the experience of being in the Cro-Mags with a sense of nostalgia saying: "even now that everything's gone down I would still gladly get together with all of these guys" and "those guys and the songs that we played together meant something to me." Harley talks about his early memories of his time with John Joseph in a way that shows it's not all hard feelings between the two.

If you can get past the countless fighting stories, and the sometimes confusing timeline, you will find Harley to be one of the unsung heroes of the punk movement. The book contains a large collection of black / white and color photographs to validate the Hollywood-esque life story Harley has lived. The writing style really feels like what the book is: a grizzled veteran trying to make sense of it all. Harley Flanagan's story is the manifestation of the history of punk in NYC, and a riveting account of what it was like back then. Fans of punk, hardcore, and New York history will have be very interested in the details this book provides.

Harley leaves the book open ended, as his story is not finished being told. Maybe in time Cro-Mags can have the happy ending that they should have had, and the notoriety they most certainly deserve. I believe this book is a step in the right direction.

—Mason Mercer

CONTRIBUTE TO MRR

In addition to scene reports, guest columns, and interviews, we're looking for a few specific contributions:

We want some new columnists to write about Hardcore with a capital H and garage rock, as well as regular columnists from South and Central America, the UK, and Southeast Asia. For consideration, send a sample column and a list of three topics you'd cover in future columns.

FILM AND PHOTO ISSUE

We're accepting submissions for our next special issue. Photographers, send five of your best images for consideration. Filmmakers, let us know what you're working on! We'll get in touch with the best submissions in order to develop features.

ABORTION ON DEMAND WITHOUT APOLOGY

Have you been involved in organizing around abortion-related legislation where you live? Do you have an abortion story (positive or negative!) that you'd like to share? Do you want to be a part of normalizing conversations around access to reproductive rights? We're planning a special feature. Contact us if you'd like to contribute.

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(RH) Ryan Hertel
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
((RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(SW) Shivaun Watchorn
(WN) Robert Collins

AHOE-AHOEA – "True Love Never Dies" LP

Nervous skittish squatter art punk from the Netherlands circa 1983. Amazing disruptive yet danceable guitar as a rhythm instrument paired with a rhythm section that's like a Dada typewriter caveman combo. The lyrics are so smart and casual, anti-colonial discourse that takes down European expansion and Tarzan movies, the coziness of Modern Life at the cost of whose death. They're so witty and direct that it doesn't feel like Political Science 101. Fans of the EX and the RONDOS, you will lose your minds over this reissue! Parts of it sort of remind me of WIRE in a very pleasing manner, especially the song "Terminal Boredom," but they definitely sound more like a post DELTA 5 / GANG OF 4 group, with a slice of anarcho pie in there too. They played their first show after one rehearsal, the true insurrectionary Fluxus spirit of the punk idea. This recording feels fresh and essential in a sea of unnecessary reissues…Get it! (LG)
(Bunkerpop)

ALIEN BOY – "Stay Alive" EP

ALIEN BOY are thoroughly and reliably Pacific Northwestern in their songwriting. Their attempt to meld Portland's favorite icy punk stylings with the earnest pop punk of Rumbletowne Records bands (and other late-era emo / pop punk bands) works at times, but most of these songs sound like punkified ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN and SAD LOVERS AND GIANTS tunes. The closing number is the one time they truly escape that, sounding more like WEED, EMPTY HEADS, or CANCERS, playing blown out pop punk without any qualifiers. If there's one thing that they don't do well, it's showcase their humor. There are a few funny lines in the lyrics, but sadly they get buried and I miss them, even when I know they're coming. Too bad—I wanted to laugh through the tears. (LP)
(Good Cheer)

ALLES – "Culture" CD

Bludgeoning darkwave synth duo from Poland. It's not hard to imagine this group kicking back with some Minimal Wave collections in their free time, but the warm, scratchy, analog tones of groups like DEUX or MARTIAL CANTAREL are subbed in favor of heavy sampling and a flair for the baroque (or maybe to the impressionistic—the liner notes point out that they've borrowed some synth lines from Chopin). There are some head-turning effects here: one track will sequence some MIDI horns or strings, another loops a synth that sound like an upright bass slowly being pulled apart by hand. Some of these tracks have some insane post-jungle drum programming that makes me think of the PRODIGY, but this CD sounds closer to Equilibrium than The Matrix. Heavy stuff, should get many pairs of creepers shuffling if you drop this on a dark enough dance floor. (EW)
(Antena Krzyku)

ANGRY GODS – "The Clearing" LP

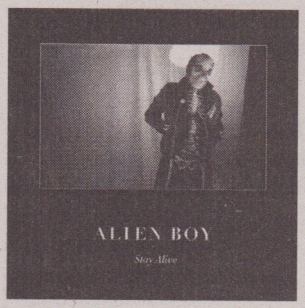
"The Clearing," AKA if CURSED recorded records while drinking lean. Also reminds me of this band MOUTHBREATHER, who had a sick demo (but who I stopped paying attention to shortly after that). At parts this record reminds me of a dirtier CROWBAR, who wrote a record after listening to the JESUS LIZARD on repeat for a few months. If you're into heavy shit, this is for you. (MW)
(Hip Kid / Kid Sister)

ANTICHRIST DEMONCORE / CHIENS – split 5" EP

Great, a 5" record that my turntable will refuse to play. At least this format guarantees that the ACxDC content will be short. I'm just not buying it from these guys. It's like they go through all the proper powerviolence motions, but they didn't really smoke the powerviolence Kool-Aid, you know what I mean? Whatever, if you're a fan, here are two more tracks for you in a cute, novelty format. CHIENS from France plays straight ahead grinding crust with lyrics about things they don't like about the grind scene...Sick. (BA)
(Regurgitated Semen)

ATOM MOUTH GIMLIES – "Music on Quills" 12"

Dark and desperate-sounding garage punk from Finland. This is my first exposure to this band, and the first track made me think of LOST SOUNDS, without synths and stripped of vocal melody. I slowly came to realize that this is a much more deranged band. The singer has a distant howl that never comes to sound familiar over the course of this record's roughly sixteen-minute playing time. Come to think of it, this whole record sounds like it was recorded at the end of a long, dark hallway. By the time I flipped this one I was fully immersed: the B-side features an especially sick sequence of tracks, 45 seconds at a time, spiraling out of control between severely damaged interpretations of the URINALS and FEEDTIME . If you are a fan of songs where



the players manage to play out of sync with one another even though there's only one riff (or even one chord), don't let this slip under your radar. Defiantly ugly music. (EW)
(Gafoni / Jumatsuga / Urealis-Tuotanto)

THE AUTOPSIES – "A Memoir From The Morgue" EP

Three songs from this Los Angeles psychobilly band. They are more understated than the usual psychobilly group. It's not cartoony. The vocals are sung deeply with a bit of a drawl. The music sounds nice. It has an old-timey, minimalist feel. (CK)
(Killjoy)

BACTERIA – "28 Trax Demo" LP

Long a staple of the nth generation dub tape trading scene, BACTERIA featured one Hideki Kawakami on guitar and vox alongside a buddy on second vox and a drum machine cranking out some ultra-bare bones noisecore influenced by SORE THROAT and FEAR OF GOD. Songwriting-wise (a strange word to use in reference to the style, but what are you gonna do?), this doesn't hold a candle to the aforementioned bands. The real appeal of this recording is captured by the enthusiastic delivery and charmingly shit recording. In a month where we're reviewing new releases by masters of the style like FINAL EXIT and NOISE it's hard to give this a strong recommendation, but Kawakami completists and noisecore obsessives will find a fair bit to love here. Sadly, this is a very basic reissue, offering no information beyond the song titles and recording info. I imagine there's not a ton of contemporary material available to include, but a few more photos and perhaps a bit of writing to contextualize the release would have been very welcome. (AU)
(Regurgitated Semen)

BAD DREAMS ALWAYS – "Inavelns Maktkorridor" EP

A stunningly mediocre release from this long-running Swedish troupe. Eight tracks of remarkably unmemorable hardcore that seems to draw inspiration primarily from the mid-'90s releases of bands that were great in the '80s like POISON IDEA and SICK OF IT ALL. It's limited to 300 and comes with a patch, which is nice I guess. I'm most impressed that this band managed to blag their way onto a pretty good label with this material. (AU)
(Höhnie)

BEARTRAP – "Stoughton Forever" EP

Damn, this is good. Raging metallic powerviolence / fastcore from Boston that matches the intensity of CHARLES BRONSON and DISCORDANCE AXIS with much heavier and more controlled vocals, similar to DEFORMED CONSCIENCE. Almost all of the songs clock in at under a minute, yet somehow BEARTRAP are still able to create complex changes in speed and pace. There are eight songs in maybe five minutes, but there is a lot going on here in terms of songwriting, while still sounding impenetrable. (JR)
(Here and Now! / To Live A Lie)

BEASTEATER – LP

Some '90s Midwest garage punk luminaries (one of the DIRTYS!) get together to make some noise and piss off someone older than them or maybe you. The vocals are nicely slurred and growled and the music is raw, putting them on the harder end of that genre's spectrum. The relentless fuzz gives this an almost early grunge or '80s Australian sound like MUDHONEY with balls or the LIME SPIDERS. They do a wicked cover of the SWELL MAPS's "International Rescue" as well. (RO)
(Big Neck)

BRAIN VACATION – "Nuclear Retort" LP

BRAIN VACATION play hardcore that's a little noisy and pretty angry and write songs that aren't the most memorable, but they're somewhat redeemed by the vocal fury, raw recording, unpredictability, and overall energy that probably lends itself to a great live set. This record is mid-paced or powerviolence breakdown slow more often than not, but they're at their best when they're playing fast. The title track is the standout, including the noise jam outro. (DG)
(Wall of Youth)

BREAKOUT – "Nothing In Sight" LP

These guys are p-u-n-k. They got the gear, the hair and some snappy Pushead inspired cover art. They're French and look like G.B.H with good skin. They're pretty dull. From their look, you might expect an UK82 or Euro punk sound but it's seemingly much more US-influenced, a POISON IDEA or SUBMACHINE-loving suburban crew. The best songs incorporate the dual vocal choruses like "Punk Decay," but I can't really get behind most of this. Like their look, it's a little too slick, new, and shiny for me. (RO)
(Bomb-All / Maniac Attack / Nuclear Chaos / PHR / Spit It Out! / Subzine / Trauma Social / Veghangover / Warhead Punx)

BRUISER QUEEN – "Telepathic Mind / Rainbow In The Dark"

Two catchy poppy garage tunes from this St. Louis duo. Singer Morgan has a great voice. It is strong and powerful while also sounding delicate and understated. "Telepathic Mind" is an upbeat song, while "Rainbow In The Dark" is more of a ballad that reminds me of '80s HEART. Good stuff. (CK)
(Certified PR)

COME HOLY SPIRIT – "Grand Island" LP

This is the kind of record that I often wish would get sent in but rarely does, and then I realize there aren't many records like this. This is a band that comes out of punk, but brings their own specific worldview of DIY and originality to the table rather than rehashing a 25 year old hardcore record. COME HOLY SPIRIT from Pittsburgh is immediately heavy, creepy, innovative and inspiring. While I find it hard to compare them to any current bands, I'm reminded of the hypnotic repetition of LUNGFISH, the dynamic executions of DOG FACED HERMANS, the EX's attention to detail, and the sheer otherworldliness of MOTHER OF FIRE. Still, I feel like that's only scratching the surface. Every song

on here is commanding, flirting with chaos and threatening to fall apart, but they never do. The lyrics are deep and haunting without feeling overbearingly confessional. This is a perfect album to lose yourself in over repeated spins. Features members of HEX, LUNGS FACE FEET, and JOHN DENVER'S AIRPLANE. (GH)
(self-released)

CONCUSSIVE / SCUM HUMAN – split EP

A brain melting sixteen tracks from CONCUSSIVE, down-tuned throaty grind violence with mosh parts that make you want to kill. So damn relentless. Not to be outdone, SCUM HUMAN drop slices of brutal slow / blast with a few respites in the form of bare bones D-beat. The recording is exceptionally murky, burying the guitar in the background and making everything sound even more ominous that it already does. Neither band ever lets up, which is how this shit is supposed to be. (WN)
(Regurgitated Semen)

CORRUPTED YOUTH – "Class Struggle" LP

Class Struggle is kinda like if the CASUALTIES were better at their instruments when they released *For the Punx*, with an ENGLISH DOGS *Forward Into Battle* vibe, especially when it comes to soloing, and a Matt Freeman-esque bass player just going for a walk all over the record. Props on the Trump sample two days before the inauguration (he'll be in office by the time this comes out). This LP is the perfect mix of production and youthful, political bravado. Shout out to the mandatory booze track "Beer for Breakfast." Always rep the 40oz. (MW)
(Evacuate)

THE DACIOS – "Beyond the Bottom Hour" LP

We are a punk mag and I'm gonna tell you that this is a hard rock record. The DACIOS settle into a groove on most of their ten songs on this LP, recalling stuff like '70s rock (ZEPPELIN, a tepid STOOGES), spaced out '90s rock (MY BLOODY VALENTINE, SPACEMEN 3), and early Sub Pop releases. The singer sounds like she is trying to channel Patti Smith (and doing a pretty good job), but that is a really tall order to successfully pull off. On those terms, it's a fairly solid album of early '90s-flavored hard rock, but it made me want to go to sleep. (GH)
(Homeless)

DEAD ON THE WIRE – "Lonely Hearts" EP

Classic old guy punk out of San Diego. Four songs that will unambiguously remind you of 1977 classics in the vein of DEAD BOYS or HEARTBREAKERS, solid rock tunes that could be dismissed as too "by the numbers." Most songs recycle the same classic clichés you've all heard before, "Lonely Hearts" and "Diggin' My Own Grave" being the easiest to point to, although there is an understandable argument that innovation within the confines of punk is both incredibly difficult to achieve and overvalued. Perhaps you're more focused on what's fun and easy to drink to. Are you currently wearing a CBGB's t-shirt? Do you have tattoos that relate to beer or whiskey? Am I speaking to you? Then crack a cold one and check these guys out. (FS)
(No Front Teeth)

THE DE RELLAS – "Freakshow" CD

Self-described as glam boot boy, I'm not in total agreement but this is catchy glam pop. I'm thinking D GENERATION and TSAR with the style of hooks. Being from the UK, it's not unlike early MANIC STREET PREACHERS as well. Only six songs but these guys do a decent job on them. (RL)
(Rockaway)

DIE GROUP – "Joe Namath" EP

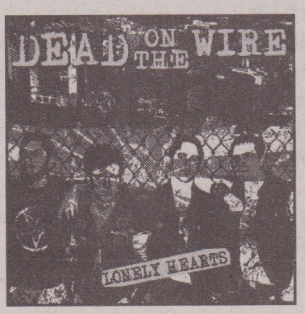
Many buds returned from Gonerfest raving 'bout this band, so they could've easily told you then what I'm gonna tell you now: DIE GROUP rules. I needed to hear it for myself, but this here EP has hipped me to their cause and I've signed on. Four hits, all boasting druggy wave tendencies laced with leather menace for good measure. An expert blend resulting in a drool-worthy single, one that'll be cited on obscure punk compilations in 2032, assuming there's still an Earth for punks to barf on. Recommended! (MC)
(Sex Tape)

DIRECT ACTION – "Third Rail" LP

Pittsburgh punks take notice: posthumous LP from legendary scene band DIRECT ACTION, later THIRD RAIL. These guys started around 1986 and around 1990 changed their sound a bit along with their name. This is fast hardcore punk with a melodic edge—the DIRECT ACTION material makes me think of DAG NASTY and UNIFORM CHOICE. The THIRD RAIL material from 1990 gets more into DC Revolution Summer territory à la SOULSIDE and the then-burgeoning pop punk scene. Great stuff, and there's a pretty finite amount of bands / records pulling off full LPs in this style in the '80s. Highly recommended if that's your thing. Rad silkscreen cover, and if the stamp on the label is to be believed, limited to 110 copies—yikes! (GB)
(Mind Cure)

DISTANCE / ISOLATED – "Hardcore Brotherhood" split CD

Czech Republic's DISTANCE belt out some "old dudes remembering '80s SXE hardcore reenactment" that I couldn't quite wrap my head around. It's so perfectly executed that it immediately feels like 1987 up in this piece. Topped with terrible English, I can't help it...it's kind of charming. I'd like to say Germany's ISOLATED pull off a more current sound, but I'll be goddamned if this doesn't sound like a Scumdogs-era GWAR, minus any and all theatrics. That dude is a dead ringer for Oderus at times. Sung in German, I have no idea what they're singing about, except they have one song with an English title called "Skate Or Die." I just can't stop thinking of early GWAR, though. Shit, that's a compliment! (DZ)
(Steeltown)



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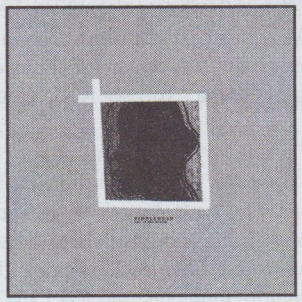


D.O.A. – "Fucked Up Donald" EP

It's a brave new world. I mean, who coulda predicted Ronald (Reagan) and Donald (Trump)'s names would rhyme. Or that Joey Shithead would still be alive 40 years later. "Fucked Up Donald" somehow sounds not totally shitty—they managed to not totally fuck up the recording. Maybe they will sell a shitload of 'em. On limited edition red vinyl. (GB)
(Sudden Death)

EWA BRAUN – "Sea Sea" LP

This is a remastered reissue of their 1998 CD / cassette (first time on vinyl). EWA BRAUN were a Polish noise punk band from the early '90s—by the time of this release they had firmly moved in more of a post-rock direction. There is still a good amount of noise, but it's toned down, the vocals are spoken instead of screamed, and they've embraced mid-tempo droning bass lines with guitar feedback. It's sort of in the vein of SHIPPING NEWS without any noodling, or a punk version of CODEINE. There aren't necessarily any standout songs but it definitely works as a whole record and should be listened to as such. (PA)
(Antena Krzyku)

EXPLODING EYES – LP

Boring and pretentious late '60s / early '70s classic non-punk rock with tired hooks and no edge. I probably like most of the bands that influenced this Irish Band (early PINK FLOYD, SEEDS, BLUE CHEER) but this is some watered down shit complete with a wimpy ballad that makes me think EXPLODING BOWELS would be a much more appropriate name. (RO)
(Big Neck)

FIDDLEHEAD – "Out of the Bloom" EP

Out of the Bloom is the perfect mix of the more groovy Revolution Summer stuff à la SOULSIDE and the more mellow fare of that same era like 3. More contemporary listeners might notice moments that remind me of CREATIVE ADULT, especially lyrically, when the vocalist gets a little more throaty and pronounced, as well as bands like GIVE, especially when they go for more angular vibes. A lot of the guitar work reminds of early proto-alt bands like 100 FLOWERS at points. Sick record. (MW)
(Lockin' Out)

FIFTEEN – "Live at Gilman St." EP

This 7" was put together as a benefit for former FIFTEEN bassist Jack Curran's medical expenses stemming from his heart condition. It includes four tracks recorded live at Gilman St. in 1993, three FIFTEEN songs and a JAWBREAKER cover. Other than "Petroleum Distillation" being played slightly faster, you won't hear much of a difference in these songs from their album counterparts, so the real draw here would be the cover of "Equalized," which at least allows you to hear the band having a lot of fun playing it. As a sucker for any song that starts with a guttural "Awwww shit," "Violation" grabbed my attention right away, but in the end, there's not really a lot here of note. Definitely check out Jack Curran's GoFundMe if you feel so compelled, though. (RH)
(Dream Militia)

FINAL EXIT – "Seasons are Going and Going...and Lives Goes On" 12"

It's fuckin' tough to try to explain FINAL EXIT to the uninitiated. Incredibly technically proficient noisecore / grindcore that touches on virtually every other genre of music over the course of a given recording, if not song, all presented with a sense of humor but no irony whatsoever. Brilliant, strange, and ineffably Japanese. Drop a needle on this beast and you'll hear noisecore, grind, crust punk, heartfelt melodic pop, a killer IRON MAIDEN cover, looping experimental strangeness, and whatever the fuck "Be My Baby" is. Originally released as a 3" CD almost a decade ago, SPHC have blown this up into a proper vinyl release and it is amazing. Dance to the music, marvel at the group shot of the band skiing (I shit you not), and think deeply about the metaphor about the cycle of the year that runs through the record. Buy this record and open your brains. Amazing. (AU)
(Rager for All / SPHC)

FLASHER – 12"

Here's the vinyl edition of a long-sold out demo cassette from DC's FLASHER, making a more durable artifact of an impressive and fully realized arrival. These seven songs draw from '80s post-punk bands like the CHAMELEONS UK and the SOUND, while also maybe pulling a couple arrangement and harmonic tricks out of the later UNWOUND catalog: delay-treated guitar, propulsive tom-heavy drumming, dashes of synth here and there, tense and moody chord progressions, vocal delivery ranging from the severe to the desperate, etc. PRIESTS fans—especially fans of the new LP, I imagine—will dig this, not just because they share a member. (EW)
(Sister Polygon)

FREAK NATION / VIOLENT HEADACHE – split EP

Here we have a bunch of freaks from Spain kicking out some good, old-fashioned grindcore. FREAK NATION are so fast that it sounds like the turntable is on the wrong speed They have an old school nonstop grind sound that reminds me of REPULSION, yet the structures of their songs are a bit more warped and nauseating—in a good way of course. VIOLENT HEADACHE not only has an old school sound, but they're an actual old school band, formed in 1988. Sounding like a crusty CARCASS, they still got the filthy grindcore passion after nineteen years. This one is definitely worth hunting down. (BA)
(Fundacion CYC / Hecatombe)

G.A.U. – "Total Mind Destruction" EP

G.A.U. are a band that have adopted the trappings of the noize punk / crasher crust style but haven't ever been able to grasp what makes those bands great. There's tons of distortion, lots of reverb and vocal effects and samples and noise but no palpable sense of urgency or memorable riffs. I had hoped when I heard their split LP material a couple of years ago that this was a band on the road to getting good, but unfortunately

I don't see any development here at all. The record has cool graphics, lots of kanji all over the place and an obi and everything, but at the end of the day it's got no soul or swing at all. If there's anything worse than trying to be something that you're not, it's trying to be something that you're not and failing. (AU)
(Byllepest Distro)

GREEN DREAMS – "Here At Castle Makeout" CD

Very impressive packaging for this CD: a giant fold-out, full color cover along with insert and paper doll cutouts of the band. GREEN DREAMS are a female-fronted trio from Rochester, NY. The songs have a '90s vibe—a combination of grunge, riot grrrl, college rock, and melodic hardcore that still sounds cohesive. There is some interesting stuff here. (CK)
(self-released)

HEAT – "Feel It" EP

A really "hot" hardcore EP outta San Diego with a heavy fucking sound and a singer that sounds about 300 pounds and who would grind you into dust. They have the dirge of EIGHTBALL or GAG with the brute punch of Richmond, VA classics like WASTED TIME or MERCY KILLINGS. A shot to the nether regions with the king of them right there on the cover. Hail Satan. (RO)
(Deranged)

HERD OF WASTERS – "Total Stinker" LP

Saskatoon punk rockers HERD OF WASTERS deliver nineteen heart-melting punk tunes that sound like they were taken straight out of the '90s. That's a good thing in my book, especially since so many bands try and fail to make this genre interesting. Some tracks are more melodic and catchy, while others fall on the darker side ("Watching You," "Pitboss" and "Been a Six Pack" for example). Snotty and sweet! Side A ends with an addictive instrumental tune. The recording is clean and polished and the bass really stands out. A solid full-length debut that combines enough different elements of punk to keep the listener interested. I'm pretty impressed. (DB)
(Wasted Wax)

HOMOSTUPIDS – "Sleepy Tree" EP

A frantic explosive fuck you to boring music. Fifty fonzies' brains oozing out onto the sidewalk in unison. Bloodstains across the banal. The guitar sound of America's dreams, and a vocalist who will give you the shakes, like listening to the GRABBIES and MECHT MENSCH and shroomin'. Buy or die (LG)
(Richie / Testostertunes)

HUMUS – "Eterna Condanna" LP

HUMUS play hardcore with a very early 2000s feel. Thrashy, upbeat riffing characterizes many of the songs, with scissor beat drumming to match. The tracks occasionally wander into sludgier or blastbeat territory, and the interesting riffing and songwriting keeps me wanting to mosh for an entire LP, which is no small feat. The vocals are usually gruff and sometimes screech, and the recording is big and a bit polished, but not too much so. I hope they tour the states! (DG)
(Angry Voice / Death Crush / Eskaramuza Distro / Fuck the Police / Grind Your Mind / Nuclear Alcoholocaust / Orchestrated Dystopia / Quien Calla Otorga / To Live A Lie / Up the Punx / Zas Autoproduzioni)

HYÄNE – "Angst Real" EP

Hot new tracks from these Berliners. It's more fuzzed-out and noisier than your typical modern post-punk affair, with refreshing, innovative songwriting and great vocal delivery (*alle gesungen auf Deutsch*). The fourth and final track surprisingly pushes close to hardcore territory. Favorite moments: the KILLING JOKE-esque chorus on the opening track, and the spooky and demented vocal arrangement during the chorus in "Sortiermaschine." Cool EP. (MA)
(Static Age)

LOS IMPUESTOS – "¿Dónde Se Drogarán Los Niños?" EP

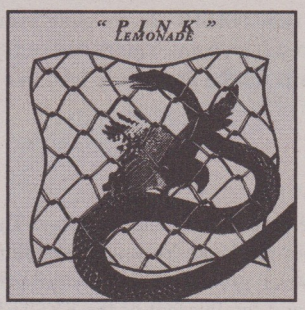
Don't judge a record by its cover. The sleeve implies some lo-fi and / or goofy garage but the contents are straight fukkn fire. Relentless off the rails grind / powerviolence with hints of melody on the slows (most notably on "Necronómicas" and "Incomodidao Del Hábito") and a tension that's difficult to describe. It all starts to fall apart when they blast, but manages to hold on until the beat drops back in. The presentation (both aesthetics and the recording itself) help white knuckle the whole experience, giving the impression that these Guatemalan punks are truly on their own trip. Determination In Sound. Highly recommended. (WN)
(CH=CH2)

KARBÖNITE – "Religious War Continues" flexi

This is a fun fucking record! No new trails are being blazed here, but the combination of high-pitched female vocals à la SAD BOYS-meets-DETESTATION, phaser-heavy noize crust riffage, and minimalist rhythm section backing is very satisfying. I could easily slot either of these songs onto a '90s crust mixtape alongside MANKIND? and early ANTIPRODUCT, and only the nods to Japanese noize punk would betray their modern origin. The world is always, always going to need angry female-fronted hardcore punk and this band is an excellent addition to that canon. RIP Nightrider Records, you've left a beautiful corpse. (AU)
(Nightrider)

KRIMEWATCH – "Demo 2016" EP

This is in fact the KRIMEWATCH demo put to vinyl, and if you know what's up, you've already heard and raged to these songs and know that this band is a force to be reckoned with live. Stompy drums that only break for breakdowns hold down hooky yet bleak, fist-clenching melodies that invoke late '80s NYHC (no Connecticut Transplants), along with *The Kids Will Have Their Say* in places, all paired with commanding Japanese-language vocals that match the righteous authority of the rest of the band. I truly hope that this is the NYHC wave of the future. (DG)
(Lockin' Out)



LEMONADE – "Pink" EP

The past and present popular drink is now an even better band. Livid, bratty vocals rail over this band's own brand of raw, ever-shapeshifting hardcore that's frantic yet always tight, and all wrapped up in the perfect trashy recording. The first song kinda reminds me of the SEX VID demo of all things, but no two tracks on here are quite the same. The drumming in particular is standout, never doing the same thing for too long. It's impossible to hear the freakout breakdown at the end of "Gusano Borracho" or the intro to "Noches Blancas" without picturing a bunch of ecstatic punks jumping around in a Midwestern basement in what will invariably be remembered as a defining mid-2010s style. I wouldn't be surprised if LEMONADE is Minneapolis' best live hardcore band since the FORMALDEHYDE JUNKIES, if not better. (DG)
(Not Normal / Thrilling Living)

MADE IN POLAND – "Martwy Kabaret" LP

Unearthed Polish (duh) magic from 1985, this LP is ten glorious pieces of proto-goth that will surely perk up the ears of revivalists worldwide. With the dreary cold that seems to be innate in much Eastern European punk / new wave, MADE IN POLAND trudges through their tracks out of necessity, and with no joy whatsoever. Lazy drums and a casually meandering guitar (with tons of effects, of course) play background to dry and miserable vocals while the bass (also effect-laden, of course) struggles to provide some kind of cohesion....but you see: this is how it is supposed to sound. These sounds aren't forced, it's just what's coming out. When the pace picks up for "Program" things get even more interesting, and the remainder of the set (the LP is a recording of their show at the Jarocinie festival in 1985) is commanding—"Ja Mysle" could almost be a Disintegration outtake, save for the vocals. It's tempting to suggest that millennial would-be goths should listen intently and take notes, but that would defeat the purpose because this isn't a regurgitation. This is real, and while I roll my eyes at the mountains of reissues while new (and worthy) bands struggle to find an audience, some things deserve recognition. (WN)
(Antena Krzyku)

MANATEEES – "Superman Dam Fool" LP

Had trouble keeping up with MANATEEES 7" spew? Blak Skul's got you with this 'un, compiling the band's first five singles on one re-mastered, resequenced platter. I'm a 'TEEES Devoteee and had 'em all already, but even I'm pumped to self-hate in style along to this. For unknowing assholes, main-stain Abe is the real deal and an oh-so-capable manager of guitar scree and hopeless, punk negativity. Even boasts a lyrical "1-2-Fuck-You" for all you real shitheads. Quite cool! (MC)
(Blak Skul)

MEN WITH CHIPS – "Attention Spent" LP

On their shoulders or accompanying fish? Both scenarios theoretically apply to this Aussie trio, sounding right at home on Homeless. *Attention Spent* doesn't require much (45 rpm, over in a dash) and 'twould appear our MEN have spans in line with that thinking (despite a few well-placed moments of patience). Songs throb and stab, each seeming uneasy in a Riley-era FALL way, that classic panic conveyance mode we all love and fear. Fans of artful and tough grill-fat splat could (and have, no doubt) done far worse. A creepy, rough tickle. (MC)
(Homeless)

MOONDOGS – "When Sixteen Wasn't So Sweet" 12"

Wow! Mighty Mouth has unearthed a real gem with their reissue of this obscure five-track EP, originally released on 7" in 1980. Birthed in sunny Southern California at the tail end of the '70s, these MOONDOGS share more than just a name with their more well-known Northern Irish brethren; I imagine their jangly guitars and strong pop sensibilities would've fit right in on Good Vibrations. While the melodies incorporate classic Anglo influences, the band's lyrics are straight out of a California daydream: sand, surf, and blue Firebirds cruising down the boulevard. The two slower ballads that close out the disc don't quite match up to the stronger tunes on side A, but overall the rudimentary recording quality and unpolished delivery is a breath of fresh air in a style notorious for overproduction in the quest for the next chart-topper. Anyway, the MOONDOGS never had a chance to try their luck in the major labels' post-KNACK / GO-GO'S new wave sweepstakes—they carried on for a couple more DIY 7"s before dissolving for good. This is their best work and highly deserving of its new 12" format and full-color jacket. Essential listening for anyone who's worn out their NERVES outtakes LP or wishes Sing Sing Records was still putting reissues out. (CS)
(Mighty Mouth Music)

MORDECAI –"Want To Be / Pictures Of Her W/Them"

One of my favorite current DIY rock'n'roll bands captured in short form, a rarity for this lot. I came late to MORDECAI, though when they hit me, they hit me hard. There's something 'bout them that checks so many familiar boxes, yet their delivery and approach is entirely of their own stitching. "Want To Be" is several tunes at once: beginning randomly with a stir of guitars, moving toward folk-strum thump, adding vocals that recall Mark E. Smith, then giving way to anthemic rock. A doozy that requires multiple spins to grasp. The flip is clearly more '60s-oriented, clearer and more tangible, almost like a bedroom bongo aping of TYRANNOSAURUS REX, but again shifting to something with more guitar chime as it tapers off. A 45 in format only, as you could spin this and hear something new several times over. A fantastic primer for what's sure to be a scorching new album. Hear MORDECAI now! (MC)
(Richie / Testostertunes)

NASHGUL – "Cárcava" LP

Sick and brutal grind / crust from Spain. Something about the presentation is especially unsettling...and in a really good way. They lurch more than groove, the dual growls are just disgusting, and the blasts are awkward and uncomfortable. And just so there's no mistake about any of it, the recording is fukkn massive, so every little thing is

in your face and crawling under your skin. NASHGUL are more than a little rough around the edges, but the result is so much more compelling than some antiseptic bore-grind. This is for the brave ones who like it big and dirty. (WN)
(To Live A Lie)

NEGATIV – "Automatic Thoughts" EP

Haunting and menacing hardcore punk from Oslo, Norway. This has got some obvious influences from the Nuke York and Barcelona scenes, but goes beyond that in an overall great mix of many different styles. Vocals are sometimes barked and reminiscent of the SYSTEM or CRESS mixed with blood-curdling cries and rad female backups. There are a few parts which are pretty straightforward and street punk sounding, but in a GRIMPLE or BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS kind of way, so I forgive them. Pummeling drums and searing non-cheesy leads round out this record quite nicely. A perfect audio recipe for making one's skin crawl. It's great to be stoked on a band from Norway, as there aren't many that I can think of from this oftentimes overlooked country lurking in the shadows of Sweden and K-Town. (JC)
(Byllepest Distro)

NEGATIVE SEX – "Rats for Lost" EP

This is a very modern sounding punk 7". It checks all the contemporary boxes: a dreary tone, flanger / chorus effect, high, siren-like guitar parts, thick, slightly overdriven bass tone, and echo chamber vocals. NEGATIVE SEX play it well, and with conviction, melding the goth / post-punk leads with hardcore chunk and heft into a mix that at once sounds familiar and refreshing. There are bands from all over who sound like this, but here the looseness of the rhythm section and quality of the recording make this 7" stand out from the crowd. (LP)
(Carbonated Sounds)

NEW BERLIN – "Basic Function" LP

Sparse, minimal, repetitive punk that hinges on the use of simplistic drum rhythms, chiming guitars, and deadpan, close-mic'd vocals. This record is a disparate collection of earlier releases, some of which are living-room experiments, some recorded in a studio with a full band. When it works, NEW BERLIN approach the dilated-pupil intensity of the odd JAY REATARD or even TOTAL CONTROL moment; when it doesn't work, the result can resemble a tossed off GarageBand demo. There are more hits than misses here, though. The lyrics are sharp throughout, not least on "Hardcore Punk": *"I am a hardcore punk / no country no soul no funk / show last night what did I see / forty other people just like me."* (AM)
(Erste Theke Tontrager / Super Secret)

NIP DRIVERS – "Destroy Whitey" LP

My punishment for mentioning them months ago, it would appear. Alas, here we have a no-expense-spared reissue of their 1984 debut, originally released by New Alliance. A really slick re-pro job: glossy gatefold, heavy colored vinyl, printed inner sleeve and a giant poster. A tad much, right? Textbook-sounding SoCal '80s hardcore punk, right in line with most of their contemporaries (though more than a few tiers down from the recognized heavies), augmented by staunchly sketchy shit that only a moron would find edgy in 2017. (MC)
(Slope)

NIP DRIVERS – "Oh Blessed Freak Show" LP

A reissue of NIP DRIVERS's 1985 LP. This is SoCal pop punkish metal-crossover hardcore at its most obnoxious. It's the kind of music that appeals to teenage boys. There are quaint attempts at being offensive—"Hollywood Boobie Star" and "Mean Teen Queen" (yeah, things were much simpler in the '80s)—and goofy covers of OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN and DURAN DURAN. I guess if you were there back in the day, this might be a nice nostalgia trip. For the rest of us there are much better stupid '80s records to waste time listening to. Slope Records does do a nice job with packaging for their reissues. This one has a gatefold sleeve and red vinyl. (CK)
(Slope)

NOISE – "Demo Tapes 1991-1995" LP

Total shit-fi noisecore from Brazil. The thing that sets NOISE apart is when they settle into a solid raw punk beat between guttural bursts of noise / grind….it makes the noise seem more chaotic and makes you itch for that next opportunity to mosh. Tons of tracks, culled from four demo tapes and one guitar-free rehearsal from 1991. Purists only, perhaps, but if you like your shit shitty…then this is your shit. (WN)
(SPHC)

THE NEW YORK LOVEBIRDS – "New York Is Forever" CD

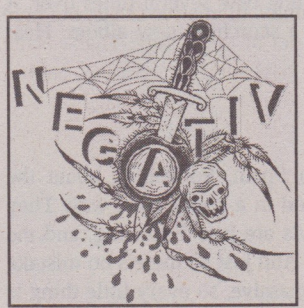
This NY band does the rock'n'soul bar band thing. This band reminds me FM rock radio circa 1976 with the likes of DR. JOHN, WARREN ZEVON, and BOB DYLAN. Certainly not punk or even new wave but this does have an artistic quality to it. Eight songs in a mere twenty-three minutes so this is really just a taste. '70s rock done in an authentic way. (RL)
(self-released)

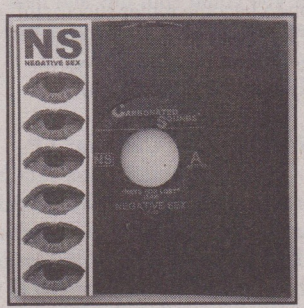
THE ØDELEGGERS – "Feil Sted, Feil Tid" EP

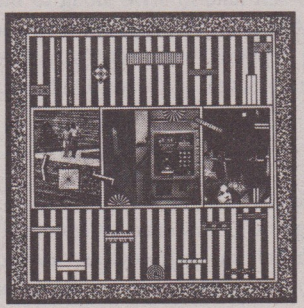
Here we have some fine Norwegian hardcore punk. I can't compare the vocal pitch to anything because I don't think I've ever heard this kind of intensity before—harsh and hoarse, and simultaneously sounding young, energetic and totally weathered. It's like if NO SECURITY were to push it damagingly far like HIATUS. The percussion is a D-beat onslaught with ripping fills, surrounded by anthemic yet chaotic guitar. They use a xylophone on the track "Krigsindustri" that actually sounds really cool. I think I love this. Seven all go, no slow tracks from Oslo. (JR)
(Lukket Avdeling / Sjakk Matt Plater)

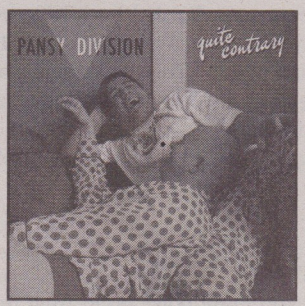
OHYDA – 12"

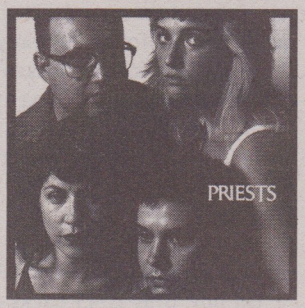
Megaton-heavy Polish hardcore / crust with a reverb laden punk vocal attack, like the love child of FILTH OF MANKIND and DESTINO FINAL high on NEUROSIS' acid. The recording has a very warm, live feel, the songs never outstay their welcome, and some of the











dropped-in solos are fucking awesome. Sadly there's no one song that stands out as an absolute classic (the industrial-tinged, ultra-militant "Zlowieszcze Sygnaly" gets the closest to that status of out of the six tracks) but everything is more than solid and I have no doubts that this band will produce some timeless bangers with just a touch more seasoning. As a vinyl debut it's goddamn impressive, that's for fucking sure. (AU)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

PANSY DIVISION – "Quite Contrary" LP

As with any band that's been doing it for 25 years (and never broken up!), PANSY DIVISION have expertly developed their particular craft. "He's Trouble," the finely refined Jon Ginoli-written anthem that opens the album, will sound familiar to old fans and make newcomers pay attention. The second song, "Love Came Along," is an ode to past promiscuity and giving it up for love by Chris Freeman, which introduces the core of the whole album. This is a more mature PANSY DIVISION, reflecting on their quarter-century career. Things really get epic, if I may use that overused term, for "Blame The Bible," the first single to come from this album. The chanting, the blasphemy, the call and response, the ear-pleasingly melodic Joel Reader chorus, and the talking-for-singing bits all make this song my favorite political punk song of the last year. The band recently played the Lookout Records reunion festival in Berkeley and were happy to point out that they're one of the few bands on that lineup that have never broken up. Jon Ginoli and Chris Freeman created a concept that is proving to be evergreen for me, and, as they don't seem to be slowing down, I'm excited to see how they can top this on their next album. (RH)
(Alternative Tentacles)

PERKELE – "Best From The Past" CD

PERKELE means devil in Swedish and are an Oi! band that's been around since 1994. This is a retrospective collection of hits. They play upbeat, positive, and catchy Oi! like COCK SPARRER and they do it quite well, but I'm really not all that positive, so the twenty songs get a little grating. Some are in English while others are in their native Swedish. My favorites are the harder-edged numbers like "Smash It," "Cowards," and the TEMPLARS-sounding rager "Working Class." Any songs with ska influence got instantly skipped, but all in all this is interesting listen from a band I knew jack about. (RO)
(Spirit Of The Streets)

PRIESTS – "Nothing Feels Natural" LP

Lead singer Katie Alice Greer has one of those voices that ring eternal, the evocation of the punk insurrectionary / a lineage of dreams that includes THERESA BRAT, KATHLEEN HANNA, POLY STYRENE, KAT BJELLAND, ALICE BAG–controlled perfection where it feels hysterical yet intentional, a piece by Louise Bourgeois and Barbara Kruger at the same time. Listening to this record makes me think of being a teenager and lying on my bedroom floor surrounded by a pile of FALL 45s and BIKINI KILL tapes, of watching "The Unheard Music" and falling in love with Exene and John, but also of music that snuck onto Top of the Pops—FUZZBOX / BOW WOW WOW / STRAWBERRY SWITCHBLADE, and even ELASTICA! It feels epic, like a really long letter from your high school best friend that is at once immediate but also will take a few months to fully digest. Mixtape essentials are "Puff," "Appropriate," and "Pink White House." The sound of hanging out in your room and of marching in the streets all at once. Hardcore DC is forever. (LG)
(Sister Polygon)

RASH – "Skinner Box" LP

Half of this band played in the great Chicago band DIVINE RIGHT a few years back, who played a kind of Midwesternized D-beat with a heavy dose of angst. This band has them mostly slowing the tempo, but going in an even more hard-hitting, stark, dissonant, and musically varied direction. What if fellow Chicagoans RAW NERVE had dabbled in noise rock, had vocals that drew heavily from early PISSED JEANS and WRANGLER BRUTES, and had gotten bigger and more defined recordings that were still noisy? While this is a well-written and executed record, it's missing hooks or something else to keep it from going in one ear and out the other. I want to like this more than I do, but I hope whatever they do next will lure me in. (DG)
(High Fashion Industries)

RED DEATH – "Deterrence" EP

I've read good things about this DC band for a minute but never listened much, mainly because I think their name and logo look cheesy as fuck. I know. I'm superficial that way. Well, this is one of the best '80s throwback metal records done by hardcore punks I've heard in awhile—and that's not a putdown. The title track shows extreme love for Kerry King's guitar fills but rips along with CRUMBSUCKERS-esque hardcore spit and fury. "Empty Shell" has more of a dirgey "Animosity" style that just kills. Even with all the '80s comparisons, which are hard to avoid in this style of music, this band stands on their own here and makes me want to see them live like I'm sixteen again, sweaty and bloody looking for my shoe in the pit. Rock. (RO)
(Lockin' Out)

OS REPLICANTES – "Nicotina" EP

High-quality reissue of one of the more elusive punk artifacts from Brazil. Originally released in 1985, their debut EP features four driving and discordant tracks of primitive post-punk. The band went on to become rather successful in the punk / alternative scene, but here you get them stripped down and fresh out of the garage. Thank Nada Nada and Punchdrunk for the elaborate packaging: exact reproduction of all art, a foldout photocopy info insert, and a fourteen-page booklet featuring accounts from band members and collaborators, awesome photos, and lyrics. (MA)
(Nada Nada / Punchdrunk)

RHDP – "Silinyador" EP

This opens with a rather dreadful '70s rock-tinged slow burner that just goes nowhere fast, but RHDP quickly change gears for the

remainder of the record. They hold onto some hot-lick rock riffs, but they're more informed by early, sleazy punk and lo-fi desperation. The singer has a voice that makes me think of LA URSS. Apparently, all of the songs are about riding a Jeepney into a world of death (depicted on the cover), but I wouldn't know for sure because all of the lyrics are in Tagalog. Besides that first song, this record is solid through and through. (GH)
(Tension Head)

SETE STAR SEPT – "Beast World" LP

Oh boy. This is 45 tracks of fast and loose noise grind from this freaky duo from Japan. I can deal with them for one half of a split 7" but a whole LP? Dang! Side A features their usual bass and drum free-grind. Lots of noise, but not much variation. On the B-side they drop the bass, and just have spastic drumming and the singer repeating things like "ass face," and "bitch ass motherfucker." Some recordings don't need to be released. (BA)
(SPHC)

SICK/TIRED / TRIAC – split LP

A double dose of death metal-informed grindcore smashing. Chicago's SICK/TIRED deliver a truly morbid pummeling, dousing us with venom and sending us into the void with every blasting. Like a raw BOLT THROWER, images of apocalyptic tank battles come through on churning waves of distortion and death. In short, they're hella metal. The same could be said about Baltimore's TRIAC, though they're more thrash inspired than death obsessed. More focused on intensity than brutality, they're like what was going on right before the tank battle. All and all, another good addition to the end-times playlist. Get it before it's too late. (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

SIDEWALK SURFERS – "Not Me" CD

A limited four-song CD from this young German band. These guys play ska punk in the vein of MILLENCOLIN and LESS THAN JAKE. Not my favorite genre but these guys do it well with a youthful spirit. I guess someone has to carry the ska punk torch, right? Not a bad start. (RL)
(self-released)

SPIRIT BOMB – "Bridge On Fire" CD

Melodic UK punk that falls somewhere between BAD RELIGION, catchy late '80s UK punk and hard hitting rock'n'roll. Close your eyes and you can see 'em on the stage at 4:30 in the afternoon, wowing a crowd of hundreds at Punk Rock Bowling. Built for the big club sound, they properly fill the shoes they've bought for themselves. (WN)
(self-released)

SSYNDROM – "History Hysteria" EP

I wasn't so impressed with this Sacto band when I saw them a while back but it's been a minute since I paid attention and they have really come into their own on this release. The sunny state capital with the most teenagers per capita in California shouldn't lend itself to stark frigid Swedish raw-D-punk-beat-core-crust-whatever but these boys have found a dark little glue huffing cavern to pound out their tribal stomping KAAOS / BASTARD / SHITLICKERS worship in peace and we're all the luckier for it. The darker and more atmospheric "History Hysteria / Death Shadow" side is my favorite because I'm a moody fuck but this one's a winner from start to untimely end. (RO)
(Byllepest Distro)

STALEPHISH – "Pole Jams" CD

I wonder if it's really easy to write music when you just decide to write every single song about skateboarding. STALEPHISH isn't even singing about the nuances of different wheel choices or the best trucks for grinding a cop's face…they're just simply talking about how cool skating is in every song. The riffs sound like they were bought at the 99 cent store on the way to the bowl. Super basic punk / skatecore. (GH)
(Not Like You)

TENEMENT RATS – "Free to Make a Jail" EP

These SoCal guys deliver six tracks of no-nonsense, catchy, and melodic, if slightly disjointed, punk rock. I'm particularly fond of the distorted guitar and the abrupt vocals, which add a certain sense of urgency. While I call it catchy and melodic, don't be fooled—this thing has definitely got some grit. It somehow has a certain SHITTY LIMITS quality. Nice work. (KK)
(No Front Teeth)

TERRORSTAT – "6-Spors" EP

So great to hear a current Norwegian band letting their rich hardcore roots shine through! STENGTE DØRER is the first comparison that comes to mind, regarding the guitar playing (melodic/palm muting), strained and gruff but sung lead vox, and backup vocals (with harmonies!). Most of you reading this probably couldn't care less about all that (unless you're from Europe in the '80s / early '90s) but as a massive fan of classic Norwegian hardcore (especially all three STENGTE DØRER LPs), this is huge breath of fresh air. The "PBPBPBAH!" in "Narkofob" puts all of your "Ugh!"s to shame. Best new band I've heard from Norway since KNUSTE RUTER. All hail Børre Løvik. (MA)
(Sjakk Matt Plater)

THIGH MASTER – "Early Times" LP

Here's the debut LP from Brisbane indie rockers THIGH MASTER, following up on two well-loved yet under-circulated 7"s. What is it they say about indie rock records with baby photos on the front cover? This might have some appeal for the Salinas Records set, featuring chiming and clanging guitars harkening back to the later ARCHERS OF LOAF records and maybe even SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE. The lead guitar playing stumbles along both sides of the boundary between casual tunefulness and deliberate noise, pairing well with the scratchy-throated self-deprecating singing style. There's a dour intonation to the vocals that suggests their contemporaries KITCHEN'S FLOOR, if not

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reaching that band's level of complete dejection. Most of this record has a relatively upbeat and wistful sensibility, though the lyrics kind of focus on the shortening of life's horizons and the unavoidability of toxic people. If you dug the last two records go ahead and send out for this one, but it's hard to say if THIGH MASTER progressed to sound more mopey or if there's something about hearing this music on an LP that drags it out a bit more. (EW)
(Bruit Direct Disques)

TRIEBLAUT – "Empire" LP

Noise rock, lounge music, avant noise fukk, heavy crushing doom, groove punk, and weird ass electronics crammed into the admittedly limited confines of rock music. Why should you, oh eager listener, oh consumer...why should you have to flip through bin after bin of mediocre LPs when all of your needs and curiosities could be met (and even exceeded) on this one fukkn record? Exactly. So here you go. TRIEBLAUT are from Germany, and they are a harsh toke. Inhale with vigor and conviction. (WN)
(On the Run)

VANDALISM – "Kings and Beggars" CD

2017 just arrived, and 2001-2002 just came back and took an epic musical shit that's part Carhartt existential crisis-core and greater parts melodic dorm room "amazingcore." The vocalist is very obviously channeling BANE with his elongated vocals and dramatic, faux-profound phrases, and I identified at least one part ripped off from *Give Blood*. Even if you like that crap (full disclosure: I once did), this is derivative and offers nothing new, and this band wouldn't have even gotten an opening spot on a STAYGOLD show back then. Thankfully, aluminum is recyclable. (DG)
(self-released)

THE WAR GOES ON – LP

A K-Town supergroup that sounds close enough to NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS (in the vocal department) to immediately trigger a Pavlovian response of excitement. This is quite a bit more rock in the production (tight, heavy, and solid) and structurally straightforward, but it maintains the melodic sensibilities of the aforementioned Danish legends. Dark chord progressions topped with even darker, self-deprecating lyrics—it doesn't get much more antisocial than this. A couple cuts from their previous EP are on here; they're the best to my ears. I think most of us agree that '00s Copenhagen was a fertile breeding ground for fresh and exciting bands. This LP proves that some of those folks are still kicking, albeit a bit older, more refined, and grown-up. (MA)
(Adult Crash / New Dark Age)

WATERY LOVE – "Ned's Dreamcatcher / Meg's Dreamcatcher"

I think this sold out at least six months ago, but here's another masterpiece 45 from Philadelphia's sole surviving skull music band. It's hard to say what makes this band so transcendent, but as far as plodding and noisy garage punk goes this is a tough group to top. I'll just say the A-side of this single is a near-perfect song, something that sounds immediately and uncannily familiar, like ACTION SWINGERS covering "You Get What You Give." Just two chords, incessant drums, atonal and squealing lead guitar lines, a laughing memento mori of a hook (*"it'll happen to you / you're gonna die"*): effortless perfection. The B-side is great too, the soundtrack to the audiobook of waking up in a cold sweat to an increasingly bleak hometown: *"...yoga in the park / twenty minutes late to the open bar / my nightmare just got even worse / Meg's dreamcatcher doesn't even work..."* (EW)
(Richie Records / Testostertunes)

THE WAYWARD – "Plutonic" LP

This is a noisy, distorted, guitar wanking mess. Well, not a total mess. The songs are structurally sound—it just doesn't always sound that way. It's pretty rock'n'roll at the core but there is a good amount of playing with time signatures and a whole bunch of technical shredding on all instruments with distant sounding, yelled vocals sitting a little behind the music. It's very much in the vein of the JESUS LIZARD. The recording itself is just lo-fi enough to make it interesting. (PA)
(Nerve Alter)

HARTLEY C. WHITE AND FRIENDS – "Something Better" LP

Left-field drippings from a fringe NYC art dude with a recording history dating back to the 1980s. "Something Better" is White's most recent project, testy and maybe not even maximum nor rock'n'roll. That said, White's Jamaican roots season the racket here, which is primitive DIY that skates between fun exploration and peripheral no-wave. The homemade, unpredictable rhythms always keep you teetering, but the vocal riffing—essentially spoken sloganeering—tends to sound too same-y after fifteen tunes. (MC)
(OSR)

WVRM – "Heartache" LP

Yeah man! This one is a top-speed, grindcore, death barge from South Carolina. These fuckers are heavy like a runaway locomotive on the rail line to hell. This is doomy grind done the right way! It sludges when you want it to, and blasts when you need it to, and when it's time to space out, they do so with a vomitus vocal dirge. If you're into ASSÜCK, old school death metal, or the grim reaper, then you should probably check this out. (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

V/A – "Destructive Decibel Domination" CD

Welcome to the new wave of Japanese metallic hardcore: Pure churning stench from DORAG, face melting brutal thrash from DISTURD, and relentless blasts of grinding hardcore from DISGUNDER. The disc starts with power and tonnage, then proceeds to get faster and somehow even more intense with each successive band. Every group is fierce and over the top...it should go without saying that I think you need this. (WN)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

Adult Crash: adult-crash.com
Alternative Tentacle: alternativetentacles.com
Angry Voice: angry-voice.de
Antena Krzyku: antenakrzyku.pl
Atom Mouth Gimlies: Anssi Häkkinen, Lehvätie 24, 40320 Jyväskylä, FINLAND, soundcloud.com/atommouthgimlies, atommouthgimlies@gmail.com
Big Neck: bigneckrecords.com
Blak Skul: blakskul.bigcartel.com
Bruit Direct: bruit-direct.org
Bunkerpop: facebook.com/bunkerpop-records
Byllepest Distro: byllepestdistro.storeenvy.com
Carbonated Sounds: carbonatedrecords.bandcamp.com
Certified PR: certifiedprrecords.com
CH=CH2: chch2records.bigcartel.com, chch2info@gmail.com
Collision Course: PO Box 865, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254, collisioncourserecords.com
Come Holy Spirit: comeholyspirit1.bandcamp.com
Death Crush: deathcrushdiyrecords.blogspot.com
Deranged: 2700 Lower Rd, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, derangedrecords.com
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Fundacion CyC: 213. Posta Kutuxa, 20110 Pasaia, SPAIN, basquegrind@gmail.com
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Green Dreams: 817 South Ave, Rochester, NY 14620, greendreamsdotcom.com
Grind Your Mind: facebook.com/grindyourmindrecords
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High Fashion Industries: 2048 N Albany, Chicago, IL 60647, highfashionindustries.com
Höhnie: hoehnierecords.de
Homeless: homelessvinyl.com.au
I Have Heart: ihaveheart.de
Jumatsuga: jumatsuga.blogspot.com
Killjoy: Postfach 301141, 04251 Leipzig, GERMANY, killjoy-records.de
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Mindcure: 3138 Dobson St. Floor #2, Puttsburgh, PA 15219, mindcurerecords.com
Nada Nada Discos: nadanadadiscos.com
Nerve Alter: nervealter.blogspot.com
The New York Lovebirds: thenewyorklovebirds.com
Nightrider: nightriderrecords@gmail.com
No Front Teeth: nofrontteeth.co.uk
Not Like You: 102 Richmond Dr. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, notlikeyourecords.com
Not Normal: notnormaltapes.storenvy.com
Nuclear Alcoholocaust: nuclearalcoholocaustrec.webs.com**Orchestrated Dystopia:** orchestrateddystopiarecords.bigcartel.com
OSR: osr-tapes.com
Punch Drunk: punchdrunkmusic.com
Quien Calla Otorga: facebook.com/quiencallaotorga
Richie/Testostertunes: testostertunes.bigcartel.com
Rockaway: derellas.com
RSR: Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, GERMANY, rsrrec.bigcartel.com
Sex Tape: sextaperecords.com
Sidewalk Surfers: facebook.com/sidewalksurfersmusic
Sister Polygon: sisterpolygon.com
Sjakk Matt Plater: punkdistro.de/shop/sjakk-matt-plater
Slope: sloperecords.com
SPHC: sphc.bigcartel.com
Spirit Bomb: spiritbombuk@hotmail.com
Spirit of the Streets: spiritofthestreets.de
Static Age: staticshockmusik.com
Steeltown: steeltownrecords.de
Sudden Death: suddendeath.com
Super Secret: supersecretrecords.com
Tension Head: tensionheadrecords@gmail.com
Thrilling Living: thrillingliving.com
To Live A Lie: 2825 Van Dyke Ave, Raleigh, NC 27607, tolivealie.com
Up the Punx: upthepunxrecords.bandcamp.com
Vandalism: wearevandalism.bandcamp.com
La Vida Es Un Mus: lavidaesunmus.com
Wall of Youth: wallofyouth.com
Wasted Wax: facebook.com/wastedwaxrecords
Zas Autoproduzioni: zasrec.blogspot.com

CONTACTS

DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(AT) Alex Turner
(GH) Greg Harvester
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(MB) Matt Badenhop
(MD) Michael de Toffoli
(SN) Sean Nieves-Quinones
(WN) Robert Collins

ATROPELLO!! – *A Los Amigos* – Explosive and raucous hardcore punk from Lima. No bass, just guitars and shouting over a relentless tupa-tupa beat. Reminiscent of classic Mexican hardcore like MASSACRE 68 or SOLUCION MORTAL. Solid. (MA) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, decadenciarec.bandcamp.com)

BUDDY SYSTEM – Tough, straightforward hardcore with growling vocals and intermittent outer-space sounds. The riffs are catchy as hell, and screamin' metal guitar leads cut through the chaos. Includes at least one pogo breakdown. No-bullshit lyrics about destroying capitalism and staying positive. Equal parts brutal and ecstatic. Fuck yes. (HB) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, buddysystempunk.bandcamp.com)

CHUNDER BUFFET – *Social Delicacies* – Five mid-tempo tracks with straightforward riffs, fuzzed out guitar tone, and a sense of methodical non-urgency. There are some creative guitar leads, and the vocals are really cool with some interesting breakaway melodies. The liner notes explain that the lyrics address feminist themes and are written by the band's female singer, but that still doesn't keep me from cringing at the title of the opening instrumental track, "Suck My Dick Ponytail." (HB) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, chunderbuffet.bandcamp.com)

CIRCLE PIT – *Society Burns* – Cover artwork features a drawing of Donald Trump exposed as an evil robot, surrounded by clouds of dust and buildings crumbling in a scene of total destruction. Crossover metal-punk hardcore riffs back up vocals that are equal parts serious political message and punk silliness ("Society Burns," followed by "Thrashed to Death" and "Godzilla Ate My Family.") Includes a few tastefully-placed group grunts and screamin' metal guitar leads. (HB) (13-song CD-R, lyrics not included, circlepit1.bandcamp.com)

COLD LEATHER – Hell yeah! Fun, tough and catchy punk from Berlin that recalls the simplicity of early '80s shit without sounding dated or retro. Some of the riffs rival NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS in earworm-style catchiness and the vocal delivery sometimes reminds me of BURNING KITCHEN, but COLD LEATHER sound raspier and a little more desperate, which is treating me just right. Fucking excellent demo! I want more. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, coldleatherpunk@gmail.com, coldleather.bandcamp.com)

DEPROGRAM – When it comes to D-beat, I can't sit here and tell you the nuances between DISCHARGE and ANTI-CIMEX (nor do I care). I *can* tell you what I like and what I don't like...and I like DEPROGRAM...and they are a D-beat band. Every track is raw, blistering, and chaotic. They're playing each strum of the chord as if it's a brick in a fascist's face. You know what I mean? Shit is good. (GH) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, deprogramoly.bandcamp.com)

DICK AND JANE / NO ALTERNATIVE – *Live at Gilman Street 1989* – Ha! From the label's webstore: "This CD release will be the only place to find three previously unreleased tracks from the headliner from the night these recordings at 924 Gilman took place in 1989. See the poster in the images section, we are not allowed to publish their name any other way." Who do you think it is? It's not the DWARVES. The DICK AND JANE stuff is pretty unremarkable drum machine / guitar / vocals stuff. NO ALTERNATIVE (whom I *love*) crank out a few classic tracks, including a TOOLS cover. The guitars sound great, but wish I could hear the vocals better. Apparently Max Volume is playing bass with them these days? I advise skipping this and going straight to YouTube and just watching old videos of him playing in NAKED LADY WRESTLERS. Unless of course you're a GREEN DAY completist, in which case you'll need to grab this for the assy-mixed but exclusive three live tracks at the end. Oops! (MA) (26-song CD-R, lyrics not included, dielaughingrecords.com)

DIE NASTY – *Things That Make Moms Cry* – Seattle bar punk with a DEAD BOYS snarl. Well balanced garage-y arrangements topped by an often confidently awkward vocalist. Some of the more upbeat stuff is okay, but I actually find the vocals to be pretty grating (which seems intentional). (MA) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, dienasty.net)

DIRT DEVIL – Dreamy punk with a strong overdriven punch, sleepy lullaby compositions with a surf pop haunt. It's heavy like your eyes when it's time to drift off into a dream, but overdriven enough to match the volume of the thoughts that keep you awake. It's a really complex tape that doesn't need a perfect mood or setting because DIRT DEVIL bring their own atmosphere. This tape really affected me and literally played in my dreams when I finally fell asleep listening to it. (MD) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, dirtdevil.bandcamp.com)

DISVEIN – *Time Is No Friend* – Furious Bay Area crust / grind with dual scream / growl vocals (mostly the screams, and they are siiiiick) and an exhausting pace. When DISVEIN do slow it down, the results are crushing, but it rarely lasts more than a few seconds. Scandinavian black metal overtones, discordant riffs that defy simple categorization, and flawless execution. Fucking light speed precision. (WN) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, disveinband@gmail.com)

EEKUM-SEEKUM / GLORYHOLE – Side A is GLORYHOLE from Sydney, Australia coming in with some pretty powerful hardcore in the vein of CRO-MAGS, with a hardline queer / feminist stance, criticizing homonormativity and male dominance in punk. EEKUM-SEEKUM (great name) from Halifax, Nova Scotia, round out side B, also hardcore but more frantic feeling, with lyrics touching on sex, gentrification, and meat factories. (ML) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, eekum-seekum.bandcamp.com, gloryholequeerpunx.bandcamp.com)

ENZYME – Fast, intense, hardcore from Melbourne, Australia. Noise-not-music influenced, drenched in static and total blown out chaos. Deranged guitar tones and effects almost edge on sounding like a synth. Ferocious, fast, unintelligible vocals scream out violent images, analogies for the mental anguish of living. There's definitely something very punk about taking a fast, tight, and technical performance and recording it on an answering machine. (HB) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, brainsolvent.storenvy.com)

FREAKS OF NATURE – *Songs For Savages* – Hell yes. Fuzzed out high-speed garage / psych mania from Phoenix. Snappy, sharp, wild, loud, and addictive, and the guitars fukkn smoke. This is *Pebbles* and *Back From The Grave* snorting

DEMOS

Adderall. "Cmon n' Dance" is my Creamer Of Thee Month. (WN) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, relatedrecords.bandcamp.com)

GIPSY SS – Well if that ain't one the most unfriendly band names…Ugly, unhinged Neanderthal hardcore punk from Hungary, reportedly fueled by drugs. Each side has a different demo, from 2015 and 2016 respectively. The first one is mostly disjointed bangs and clatters, but not without some interesting guitar flourishes laid over the odd timing, and of course a confrontational vocal intruding at every opportunity. "Gyűlölöm a Gyűlöletet" and "Zene Nélkül" even share the charging brutality of BANNLYST. The 2016 demo has a much clearer production and is more stylistically straightforward. AMDI PETERSENS ARME mixed with RUDIMENTARY PENI mixed with the MEATMEN mixed with SACCHARINE TRUST? You do the math. Shit's pretty cool. (MA) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, pizzadaysrekordz.blogspot.com)

GUEULES – My first thought was "this is perfect Burger Records indie / garage fodder," then I see that Holland's GUEULES were kind enough to rip the Burger logo for their self-released cassette. See? I smart. Lots of swing, snotty vocals, and enough punch to keep this jaded hardcore dude at attention throughout. (WN) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, thegueules@gmail.com)

HEAVY POCKETS – *Hopeless* – Dueling female / male harmonies in that satisfying PIXIES loud / quiet / loud structure. It does indeed sound very '90s in here. Please include a tracklist next time! (ML) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, reflectivetapes.bandcamp.com)

THE HYPERDRIVE KITTENS – *Back To the Alley* – Barely reviewable (in this *punk* mag) rock; sometimes saccharine power pop, mostly cheesy bar rock, and one almost punksploitation track, "Roommate Hell." Parent-friendly. (MA) (7-song CD-R, lyrics not included, Whip 'N Cream Music, PO Box 292, Alameda, CA 94501)

IRON EYE – This sounds a ton like INFEST. The guitar tone, the arrangements, vocals, and the straightedge. It sounds good, but it sounds a little too much like its influence for me. (ML) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, ironeyehardcore.bancamp.com)

KETTENHUND – Punk from Vienna, Austria. Growly yet melodic vocals sung in German over mid-tempo hardcore that is tough like a tank, rather than a spastic trashcan-throwing mosh pit. Simple without being boring. Slow but totally unstoppable. Orthodox without being rehash. A world of unexpectedly symbiotic contradictions. Also love the minimalist black and white art. Definitely check this out! (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, kettenhund@hotmail.com, kettenhund.bandcamp.com)

LIVE FAST DIE – The band name says it all. LIVE FAST DIE (not to be confused with the active-until-recently band LIVEFASTDIE… it's confusing, I know, don't you fukkrs look at the Google before you decide on a name?) play a fast and furious garage / crossover hybrid. And while that hybrid might sound like a mad scientist just spurted in a beaker and created some abomination, I can assure you that this abomination will rock your face hard. Leads for days—ANNIHILATION TIME fans rejoice—and more than enough raw energy to keep the punks happy. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, dogsandvultures.com)

THE LOWDOWNS – *This 10 Cent Life* – Old-guy punk rawk from SF that's just fine sounding but pretty uninspiring. I hear influences from all the classic late '70s bands, no need to list them. Contains a SWINGIN' UTTERS member and comes in a digipack. (MA) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, dielaughingrecords.com)

THE LOWER ECHELON – *Come To The Loud* – The walking bass instantly makes me think of DEAD MILKMEN, and while that thought sticks around, LA's the LOWER ECHELON play a slower, simpler punk. There are a few bursts of energy, but the approach is primarily laid back and on cruise control, with a sneering bar punk frontman. Quintessential California dad punk, with a JAM cover that is a "crowd favorite" at shows. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, thelowerechelon.com)

LUUM – *Born To Love* – Dirty and noisy punk rock slabs with a subtle D. Boon tinge on the vocals and '90s basement no-rules attitude towards songwriting. This is good from the first burst, but once you settle into the recording and their vibe, LUUM get even better. (WN) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, lamentrecords.bigcartel.com, luum.bandcamp.com)

MR. BANG – This tape has good artwork; that's what made me choose it out of the pile. The arrangements are hardcore, somewhat simple with some wild bass playing. Unafraid of being funky, wanking a bit, and including a slide guitar. The politics remain right on. (ML) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, mrbangfact.bandcamp.com)

NAIVE SENSE – This tape opens with a scathing, unrelenting hardcore track called "Cold Queer Vengeance." The brutality persists throughout the rest of the tape, while spacey synth effects keep it weird and make it stand apart from the regular hardcore crowd. There is no fucking around here. The lyrics can't be paraphrased, so I'll quote: *"Don't breathe too deep / I am plagued with blasphemy / this is just a taste / of cold queer vengeance."* This release is damn close to perfect in all the ways that matter. If being completely destroyed by a tidal wave of fierce queer / trans mayhem is what you are looking for, look here. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, naivesense.bandcamp.com)

NAMATAY SA INGAY – *Third World Bastards of New York* – Thrashing and crusty hardcore sung mostly in Tagalog. I hear Scandinavian influences, as well as DOOM and other UK crust. Super heavy and thick metallic guitars and desperate howls dominate their sound. (MA) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, namataysaingay.bandcamp.com)

NO MEN – *Dear God, Bring the Doom* – Dark, smoky, gothic post-punk and bright, danceable, energetic punk rock all at the same time. They have a similar output to MX-80 SOUND or the full generational spectrum of KILLING JOKE: bright gain-y bass that carries a lot of the melody and guitar, spilling into the crest of the energy, all riled up underneath calm and dark vocals, until the whole thing takes off when she starts shouting. It's a tape that'll get you excited about your death wish and proud of your darkness. (MD) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, no-men.bandcamp.com)

NOTHING BAND – *Close to the Past* – NOTHING BAND is one person (Max Nordile from WET DRAG, the BLUES, UZI RASH, and more) playing lo-fi, minimal trash noise / punk that sounds like it emanated from under moldy East Oakland garbage heaps left out in the rain. Sometimes, it's cohesive, blasted-out style, catchy songs. At other times, it sounds like the between song moments on the first RESIDENTS LP. If nothing else, it is interesting, but it is also definitely great and inspiring. (GH) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, nothing-band.bandcamp.com)

PHILIPPINE VIOLATORS – *At Large!* – Originally released in 1987 on the seminal Twisted Red Cross label, here's a faithful official reissue of this classic Filipino punk band's debut tape. Screaming sandpaper guitars and youthful urgency are served through a genuinely raw production. Equal parts catchy melodic punk and early '80s UK punk make this palatable for pretty much anyone with a punk wrinkle on their brain. The whole offering culminates in the final chaotic NEOS-esque track, "Leave Me Alone," which surely will have you tearing the house apart. *"Who the fuck needs society? Maybe you but not me!"* Agreed. Recommended. (MA) (15-song cassette, lyrics to one song included, worldgonemad.bigcartel.com)

PISSE – *Kohlrübenwinter* – Classically irreverent German punk in the late '70s way of bands like ABWÄRTS. Stripped down to pure basics with stark, shouted vocals and a guitar that is so clean that it sometimes just sounds like percussion. Maybe this sounds old to some ears, and maybe that's the easiest way to describe PISSE, but I'll be fukkd sideways if this isn't the newest and most original punk I've heard all month. (WN) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, pisse.bandcamp.com)

PLURAL BEING – Heavy and down-tuned emotive / melodic hardcore, like the '90s. Reminiscent of the popular southern bands (HIS HERO IS GONE, DAMAD, ANTISCHISM) but more modern and not as overtly political. Noise rock elements keep comparisons from

getting too comfortable. (MA) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, ibfrecords.com)

RARE FORM – Connecticut hardcore that takes its time, with driving beefy guitars and guttural bass through every inch of the palette steadily running you over rather than smashing over your head and running. The singer's vocals have a great barking ferocity that stings, and the lyrics that linger. The songs are about challenging people to fail, not proving anything to anyone else, and dismissing people that don't take a chance in the first place. There's a lot of strength and conditioning in this, which will either inspire you to come up or make you reevaluate why you're still down there in the first place. (MD) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, rareformhc.bandcamp.com)

SACRAMENCE – *Lovers Seek Dominance* – Very off-putting, disheartening, surreal cold wave, the essence of someone who's just woken up in a strange room and is trying to figure out how to get out. It kind of made me go through stages of noir: paranoia, alienation, moral ambiguity, all the existential anxieties that'll make you reevaluate the people in your life and what they really want. It gives a rich and dark backdrop to an industrial output of noise droning into gloomy ambient soundscapes. Overall it'll make you question your own sense of safety. (MD) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, sacramence.bandcamp.com)

THE SILVER SCREEN – *Ex Nihilo* – Cutie-pie indie folk from a single songwriter, with his guitar over light surf pop drums and occasional spouts from a fun lounge keyboard. His soft and comforting melodies are all a backdrop to a huge amount of content in his lyrics that sound more like he's reading a poem out of his journal that he never intended to commit to fitting into a song. His message is abundantly clear and specific. It's so very sweet and confident that it actually made me kind of chuckle at how clever the words are. Cute. (MD) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, thesilverscreenband.bandcamp.com)

THE SMARTHEARTS – This one hits the spot. Hearts on their sleeves, the SMARTHEARTS play hopelessly endearing '60s punk with poignant lyrics that hit just as hard when singing about a lost lover as when they are addressing social inequities. Vocals straining to hit the high notes and snarling to make a point, and "Let's Ride" is the coolest track of the month…until "Memory Man" drops to cool this one down to a close. Equal parts M.O.T.O. and BEACH BOYS…rewind buttons were made for moments like this. Superb. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, thesmarthearts.bandcamp.com)

SPITE HOUSE – Mathy, on-the-edge-of-funky, slithering, slinky post-punk from NYC. The shouted vocals keep it interesting and from sneaking into an indie rock territory, which was a fear for me. Definitely hard to pin down but thoroughly engaging from start to finish. (GH) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, spitehouse1.bandcamp.com)

STALINS OF SOUND – *Biology Museum* – Second full-length album by San Diego's self-described "drum machine synth punks." Catchy, weird synth punk that incorporates sporadic metal-influenced guitar shreddage. Major, upbeat melodies over monotone, repetitive vocals make it sound kind of like ANDREW WK wrote music for the SPITS. May be appropriate theme music for a heartwarming film about a group of robot friends graduating high school and spending their final summer together amid a backdrop of vaguely conceived fascist sci-fi dystopia. (HB) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, volarrecords.bandcamp.com)

SUBJECTS//RULERS – In-your-face screamo from Nashville. The singer must require hella ThroatCoat to do this band. Constant scream(o)s over heavily reverbed guitar melodies, which create a cloudlike musical backdrop. The full-on parts actually sound like black metal. Soft black metal. Ha! Anyway, it's really well done, but no screamo for me, thanks. (MA) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, ibfrecords.com)

SUBSUMER – Vaguely melodic hardcore from Seattle. Very vocal driven: two voices, one raspy and one more clear. The rhythm section is tight, while the guitars jangle in a chaotic matter, adding an unpredictable element. When I hear folks refer to "crust pop," I imagine this. While that might make many of you cringe, I'll say that SUBSUMER retain a lot of soul in their music, and they ain't no clone band. (MA) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, subsumer.bandcamp.com, Bex Berryhill, 2719 15th Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98144)

SURGE – *Avalanche* – Whoa, kids, you're setting the bar dangerously high by starting this fukkr off with that kind of guitar squeal, and we listeners don't like to be let down. Just like that, SURGE explodes. Raucous distorted punk that gives no fukks. Modern HC stomps mixed with unfettered noise punk detonations. Damaged gallops with guitars that fall somewhere between DISCLOSE and *Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Waste* (yeah…I went there) and the shit is a steamroller. Sold. (WN) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, surgepunx@gmail.com, surgepunx.bandcamp.com)

TERKÖS – I felt particularly pummeled by this tape. Rapid-fire and unrelenting desert hardcore that hits so hard; the constant onslaught of impacts take a second to sting before the pain sets in. The vocals specifically have a ton of delay on them: TERKÖS want their singer to echo, as if they've made a clean wall of devastating sound, and she's launching her vocals over that, creating a trail that lands each echo so you can hear her struggle behind a raining sheet of music. You won't have a moment to breathe with this tape. (MD) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, terkos.bandcamp.com)

THOUGHT PATTERN – *The Bradfords* – Off-the-rails lo-fi garage noise freakout city, rejoice; the gods have answered your call. Mind fukk sample collages, snotty shit-fi garage with '80s keyboards? Sure man, why the fukk not. Do it. Get weird. Blast me with your drum machine bedroom punk until I can't stand it…but if this is what you are offering, then I'm gonna tell you that I will still want more. (WN) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, thoughtpattern.bandcamp.com)

TWELVE HOUR TURN – *Live At WNYU 88* – Wow. This is a Wow tape. Compositionally this music has very well-written songs on the skramz end of indie, emotional and creative pieces full of bleeding-heart screamies. The whole thing being live gives it this raw and exposed quality—this sounds like a band rehearsing in their studio, summoning the courage to expose these songs in front of an audience. There is no gloss to this, nothing to hide behind, just determined and calculated indie math melodies and bleeding-heart vocals. One of my favorite things is that this was recorded in '98, which is a year before *Lonesome Crowded*, but it has a similar emotionally unstable, musically unhinged, and anti-structured construction. That same expression of off-its-rocker wailing mixed with pristine moments of clarity will define whatever you're working through. It's astonishing that these recordings are almost twenty years old now, and it still stacks up and hits home today. I'm so thankful that someone pulled this out of the archives. (MD) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, bakeryoutletrecords.bandcamp.com)

VITRIOL – *The Crown* – The first track, "Dirty Little Snitch," is the hit on here: a weird creepy pop punk-ish song delivered with slow, unstoppable determination. There is something irresistibly disgusting about it that is not commonly found in the pop punk realm, and reminds me of the first NATURE BOYS album. Some of the other tracks fall more closely into line with the heartfelt, political end of the pop punk universe. A couple of the songs are unselfconsciously weird and theatrical. This tape is really creative and refreshing, definitely something to check out. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, vitriolpunks.bandcamp.com)

Y2K – Hard and fast, this is hardcore. Also: yelling. Exciting starts and stops, pretty cool arrangements. The art is good, the song titles are good, hoping the lyrics are...good. (ML) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, whytukaye@gmail.com)

V/A – *Quality Time Records Volume #1* – A label sampler of fourteen different alt rock / garage / punk-ish bands from across the USA, all more than capable sounding, but hardly anything I could imagine the majority of our readership giving much of a shit about. (MA) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, qualitytimerecords.bandcamp.com)

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ZINES

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(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(KS) Kenn Suto
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix

CONTESTED GROUND #2
£1.50 / 38 pgs
A small collection of soccer writing from a handful of UK punky men. *Contested Ground* isn't so much about the game itself as the experience of the fan—the "football supporter" to be precise—taken through the lens of the DIY community. As someone whose experience with soccer is limited to watching maybe half of a World Cup game every four years, reading this zine was a bit disorienting. If you don't follow "association football" you may lose track of the names of cups, clubs, leagues, and players. Context isn't necessarily crucial for some of these pieces: highlights include one punk's interview with his two granddads who'd been going to matches together for about 40 years, a couple forays into travel writing via recollections of away games, and a recap of a match between lower-tier German teams that goes off into an analysis of the efficacy of igniting fireworks at matches. In my opinion, this zine would benefit from some editing, but actual sports fans should be pleased with this one. (EW)
cgzine.blogspot.co.uk

JUST FILE UNDER PUNK #3
free / 10 pgs
This 8.5" x 11" B&W zine feels like a real dispatch from far off; it's stapled together on the cover and each page has a collage of show flyers and photos or just blocks of text on white. I can't tell you much about the author or backstory on this zine, but it's got a grip of album and show reviews (focused on Australia, where the author is now), plus a bit on how amazing Discharge was, and a concluding piece about favoring bands that stay away from major labels. All pretty standard stuff, and the reviews are solid and demonstrate a real long-term appreciation and understanding of punk, crust, and hardcore. It also seems like, from my meager perspective, Australia's punk world is working overtime these days to churn out the jams and it's good to see a fanzine touching on that (I'm sure others are but this is the first to parade itself in front of my eyes!). Pick it up if you love Discharge, Australian punk, crust, and hardcore, a good argument for 7" over full-lengths, or if you just find it anywhere. (KS)
no contact info provided

NODE PAJOMO 2.1
$2, $3 international / 18 pgs
Node Pajomo 2.1 is the relaunch / return of the *Node Pajomo*, a previously ongoing work from the creator who goes by PJM. It's billed as "a contact zine in the spirit of *Global Mail* and *Factsheet 5*" (If that means something to you, you're ahead of me) and is filled with zine reviews, information on a giveaway, and mail art listings so you can reach out and connect with other zine folks to spread art around and keep the world of print materials weird, fun, and refreshing. The reviews in here are smart, knowledgeable, and cover a wide range of material from all over the map. Don't let the simple B&W construction fool you, *Node Pajomo 2.1* is the kind of zine that tickles the xerox nerd in me. I'm down for more. (KS)
PO Box 2632, Bellingham, WA, 98227

NOT FOR EVERYONE #4
$2 / 22 pgs
Despite some pretentious writing in the intro and Heavy Hands / Sweats tour diary, this is overall a great zine that's got plenty of funny irreverence and descriptive writing. The interview with Boise's Ingrown gives a window into their band and being punk in Boise, and serves as a reminder that shows and scenes in lesser-known places can be far better and more fun than in cities with punk name recognition. Unix from Portland are also interviewed in a very "tape recorder after their set" fashion. An above-average reviews section (that's still wrong about the Vanilla Poppers EP) leads into a show reviews section where a lot of overdue observations and opinions are doled out. As someone who spent the first 23 years of my life in the Pacific Northwest, a lot of these reviews hit home hard. Finally, an old interview with '80s UK band Seats of Piss is reprinted with care. Cool cut and paste layout, and while most of the many photos in here could be less blurry, it's not a big deal. (DG)
1130 SE Ash St, Portland, OR 97214 / notforeveryone.storenvy.com

NOT NECESSARILY THE NEWS #5
34 pgs
Despite being named after one of my all time favorite (yet practically unknown!) television shows, I was a little leery of this at first. In the intro, the author announces that the issue will be mostly interviews with close friends, each named Ralph, and I thought that seemed like a bummer read. Enter the first Ralph, the head honcho at Not Normal Tapes. Instead of asking influences, or sharing boring tour stories of his several bands, this interview dove into this particular Ralph's thought process at each major turn of his bands and label. Not spine-tingling excitement, but right up my alley. Why put out a record? What were you thinking? What's the point? I liked it. Enter the second Ralph, a law firm lackey who is also a writer of fantasy novels. Sounds lame, right? Well, it wasn't totally. It was kinda cool. I was stoked on the use of D&D for character development. Then there's one tiny review of Dusteaters, from Japan, and reviews of the author's old street punk records to see if they hold up. There's a much too short rant on Metallica, which, to be honest, made a pretty good fucking point: that they would have sold out even if Cliff survived. I liked this little read. Check it out. (DZ)

2020 N. California Avenue #276, Chicago, IL 60647 / hip.kid.records@gmail.com

PLASTIC BOMB #97
€3,50 / 79 pgs
Not sure exactly when the change happened, but this issue of *Plastic Bomb* is in color (for some sections) and uses a paperstock that might not be thicker than newsprint. This time around, you get interviews with Fat Mike (why?), a band called Fckr that wear animal masks, Brieftauben, Stumbling Pins, Sarah Blablabla, and a few others, along with some reviews, a tour diary, and what looks like a decent Australian punk history lesson. Also comes with a 29-song sampler CD of what looks like mostly German bands. (DG)
Heckenstrasse 35, 47058 Duisburg, GERMANY / plasticbomb.de

SCAM #10: 25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
$5 / 152 pgs
Twenty-five years since the first *SCAM* issue huh…I hope you're ready to feel old, Erick Lyle! Your zine is as old as the reviewer! I grew up on *SCAM* the way I grew up on *Cometbus* and *Doris*, particularly the Hunt's Donuts Epicenter of crime issue, the one about Art Basel in Miami, and the history behind Black Flag's *Damaged*. I always learn something new, and get inspired reading about an older punk still living out their youthful ideas of resistance, creativity, and community. This largely contributor-based issue draws on intersections of art and activism, which is fitting for the Trump era we're entering. At a time when no one seems to have energy to figure out how to build a movement, it's cool to see concrete examples of people who are doing it all the time. There's also a lot of solid writing about art for people who fucking hate the art world (hi, me). Do you hate art or "Art"? What about if someone saws through a couch and rips out all the stuffing and just leaves it there? What about a woman who smokes weed as her art piece? What about music only dogs can hear? What about a movie where women kill and eat their stalker? There's also a really great interview with queer cartoonist Edie Fake about how dumb MFA programs have become and how institutionalized academic pressures are ruining art. Not all the contributions are great, though. I was super bummed to see my hero Pear struggling to describe why he likes graffiti with pseudo-poetic language. Erick Lyle himself has an (intentionally?) terrible poem with verses like "Cover my shift bro / Sheer Mag and Hank Wood tonight / This night must not end." And while I also think it's admirable that Lyle tried to pack so much into one issue—for $5 this is a great deal—I'm not sure who has that kind of attention span for a zine. If it was even a fifth this size the articles that were truly stellar would have a chance to stand out more. Is it my fave issue of *SCAM*? Nah, but if you're already a fan, I'd pick it up. (AB)
1011 Bedford Avenue #3 Brooklyn, NY 11205 / onthelowerfrequencies.com

SCREAM QUEENS #1
$5–10 / 102 pgs
Scream Queens is foremost a weekly pirate radio show, and this is their accompanying manifesto. The screamers / makers are a group of radical femmes, some of whom are queer, POC, trans, and other intersecting identities—all of whom are badass. Highly recommended. You can reach out to them by email or regular mail to find out how to stream the shows online. If you are local to the Bay Area, the station is located at 104.1 FM. This is the most inspiring, cutting-edge, and relevant publication I've seen in years. At every turn the content is righteous, affirming, engaging, and totally hilarious while also being dead serious. I love that, as they write in the intro, they aren't looking for a seat at the table, but to smash the table entirely. They balance so much heavy shit and realness with the beauty of radical resistance to the hetero-cis-white-supremacist-patriarchy. So many bomb interviews! One that really moved me is with hardcore favorites In School, where Golnar responds to a question about "worlds interacting" of her cultural background versus being a punk and being queer, with the notion of being in constant exile from each of these facets of her being. She calls on the incidence of many great Iranian intellectuals writing the height of their work from exile, and points out that being an insider is "precisely the comfort zone from which so many of the most retrograde ways of thinking emerge." Can you imagine being one of her students? Every day there must be a brain explosion in class. Another highlight for me is the conversation with Carolina Hicks who makes art under the moniker SBTL CLNG, depicting a demented Powerpuff Girl-looking character fighting through grief, depression and anxiety. Her work is stunning and the interview is full of challenging thoughts about handling pain. I was also really impressed with the extended selection of poets who are featured. Each was asked a few common questions about their voices, coupled with some poems. It feels heartening to get these intimate poems on these pages, notably Andrea Abi-Karam's anti-cop, anti-tech bro rants. *Scream Queens* also talks with Karyn, who bravely went against the tide by showing up as a counter-protester to a Chinese-American led rally in support of a convicted Chinese-American NYPD cop who killed an unarmed Black man, Akai Gurley. This talk shows the intricacy that this magazine gets into, covering the complex relationships we all have with our own identities and with power, in this case, Karyn being accused of "not really being Chinese" since she was against supporting this cop. There are questions of nationalism, of groupthink, of the way that some POCs can uphold white supremacy, and the answers beget more questions. Really insightful. There's so much more that I didn't even mention! This entire zine is a really great read, one that I will come back to many times I'm sure. Do not miss out on this gem. (JB)
PO Box 22281, Oakland, CA 94623 / screamxqueens@gmail.com

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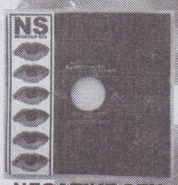

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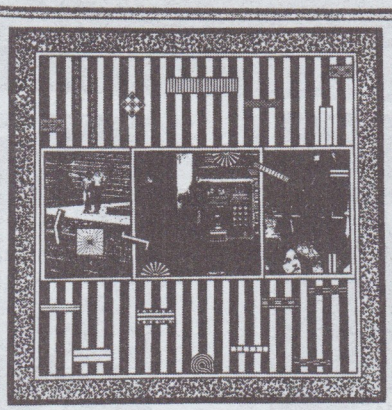

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